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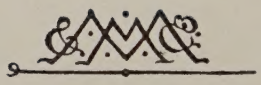

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KNOWLEDGE AND TRUTH

AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL ESSAY

BY

LOUIS ARNAUD REID, M.A.

LECTURER ON PHILOSOPHY IN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF WALES, ABERYSTWYTH

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PREFACE

My purpose in writing the following volume is mainly constructive. I have tried to establish a theory of truth which I hope is realistic, but to which I do not think any of the current prefixes, such as 'new,' or 'critical,' will apply. To achieve this end I have found it necessary to examine certain contemporary theories of knowledge and truth, and by the exposition and criticism of these to build up my positive conclusions. Thus, in one way, the book may be said to divide itself into two portions, (*a*) expository and critical, and (*b*) constructive. Chapters II., III., IV., V., and the first parts of VI., exemplify (*a*), whilst the later parts of Chapter VI. and Chapters VII., VIII., IX., contain mainly the positive thesis. But I should like to point out that this division is superficial rather than profound, and that, except for the purely expository passages (which I have kept as brief as possible and which may be of use to philosophical students not previously acquainted with the theories touched), my own thesis develops itself continuously out of the criticism of other views. This may be seen by glancing at the abstracts given with the list of chapters. The Introduction is a kind of anatomy of the contemporary situation in epistemology, and, like all anatomies approached without knowledge of physiology, it will prove puzzling

47835

to any who are unfamiliar with the functionings in contemporary thought of the views discussed. This being so, I should advise any beginner into whose hands this book may fall, to reserve his reading of the Introduction.

Perhaps I ought to apologise for the audacious attacks I have made upon the theories of those of my seniors and betters whose writings have taught me what little I know. I have thought it advisable, however, to express without restraint, that my errors may, if possible, reveal themselves more clearly, to others, if not to me. So in the end, by negative ways, we may reach a surer understanding of the truth.

I have to acknowledge here with deep gratitude the quite invaluable help, at all stages of the work, of my wife, who has devoted herself in a way which no one but myself can well appreciate. To the printers also for their care and promptitude I owe an acknowledgment.

No part of this work has been previously published, though two articles, one in the *Philosophical Review*, and the other in the *Hibbert Journal*, at least helped me to find reasons why I should choose certain paths and avoid others.

LOUIS ARNAUD REID.

University College of Wales,
Aberystwyth, *January* 1923.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

PAGE

INTRODUCTION 1

CHAPTER II

THE COHERENCE VIEW OF TRUTH 12

§ 1. *Introduction.*

§ 2. *Brief account of the Coherence theory.*

§ 3. *Criticism of the Coherence Theory.*—(α) Coherence valuable as stressing inner experienced whole of truth, as opposed to scientific abstractions. (β) Note on my view of relation of judgment to proposition. (γ) But whilst Bradley's protest against 'floating ideas' is sound, he runs to the opposite extreme in identifying thought with reality. (δ) Difficulties it leads to. (ε) Theory of judgment criticised. If the 'prehensile' nature of ideas recognised, the predicate is just as ideal—and as real—as the subject. This does not imply reality is mental. (ζ) The so-called 'gap' between thought and reality is the outcome of the false ideal that thought seeks to *be* reality. But even in feeling, whether it be of the lowest kind or that of the Absolute, there is distinction between feeler and felt. And it is the felt, or Reality, which is coherent, and not the feeling. Coherence means, then, concrete coherence, which demands differences which do not (as with Bradley) disappear in feeling. (η) Again, if truth is property of *act* of judgment about coherent reality, there is no *intrinsic* reason why a single judgment should not be true. Coherence is a test of the truth of judgments, though coherence of judgments is of course derived from reality. (θ) Internal and external relations. As well as the Whole of Reality there are wholes within it, both natural and artificial. As One, all things are internally related, as Many, externally. There are objective grades or degrees of internality, but much dispute can be avoided by defining wholes. (ι) If Many is accepted with the One, there is no reason why judgment about parts should not be (though abstractly) quite true. (κ) *Meaning* may be (1) 'objective' (as when we speak of the meaning of *things*), or (2)

PAGE

'subjective' (as when a knowing mind marks out some area of reality for thought). If the mind is (*a*) finite, the marked area will be finite; if (*b*) infinite, infinite. Always meaning involves relation of a mind to reality. Application to Joachim. (λ) From what we have said, it follows there are no 'degrees' either of truth or reality. (μ) Plan.

CHAPTER III

American New Realism, Truth and Error . . 41

§ 1. *Introduction.*

§ 2. *Brief general summary of some points in New Realism.*

§ 3. *General Criticism of some points in New Realism.*—(α) Value of New Realism in insisting on 'objectivity' of cognitive consciousness. (β) But it errs in denying the subjective aspect. (γ) To point to examples of physical reproduction, as Holt does, does not disprove the mental. Even if no *images* exist, there may be a psychic. (δ) Mind as 'cross-section' of objects, or objects as logical. These are the alternatives which neo-realistic objectivism offers. (ε) If object=logical content, then New Realists are shutting their eyes to empirical facts, *e.g. pastness.* If, on the other hand, we accept empirical facts, as space and time, we must distinguish this *real* world from our thinking and the content of thought. (ζ) The 'hysteron proteron' of defining reality as logical. Logic is the formal science of judgments of reality, and depends for its 'laws' on reality's structure. Even non-contradiction, because based upon the static aspect of reality, has limited application. (η) If, then, thought be distinguished from reality, truth and error will belong to thought and not to reality. The fallacy of 'objectivism.' (θ) (*a*) Error is not only not always, but *never* ultimately contradiction. And (*b*) the term contradiction is further utterly inapplicable to the existing world. (ι) Conclusion.

CHAPTER IV

Prof. Alexander's Theory of Truth and Error . . 62

§ 1. *Statement.*

§ 2. *Criticism of Prof. Alexander's Theory.*—(α) Advantage (as opposed to Americans) of 'act' is that it represents psychical factor. Difficulties are that it is abstract, that 'compresence' involves two factors, that the 'mind' becomes difficult to explain, that act is merely correlative to, and dependent upon object. Somehow there must be some agent, even if it be only the organism. (β) Alexander fails to make good use of his concept of 'act' or 'perspectives,' falling into new-realistic error of identifying knowledge with fact. Once again we must distinguish them. (γ) Examples of inconsistencies. (δ) Criticism that we do not know past objects literally, misplaced. Real difficulty already referred to. (ε) Because Alexander does not do justice to the subjective side of truth,

PAGE

he is obliged to introduce the social criterion. But both truth and error are primarily private affairs, involving *my* relation to reality. (ζ) Coherence of truth is dependent upon concrete coherence of reality, which coherence surely Alexander must admit. (η) To say that truth is both 'eternal' and 'progressive' is true only if 'truth' is used ambiguously. Abstract truth is 'eternally' true but is not All Truth, and must be supplemented if we are to 'progress.' (θ) Conclusion, and plan.

CHAPTER V

MR. RUSSELL'S THEORIES 79

§ 1. Foreword.

A

§ 2. *Mr. Russell's earlier theory. Statement.*

§ 3. *Criticism of Mr. Russell's earlier theory.*—(α) 'Statements' and 'beliefs' distinguished. (β) Difficulties for correspondence through lack of this distinction here. (γ) How belief does and does not 'knit' or 'cement.' (δ) Bearing of this on Russell's criticism of 'single objectives.' (ε) 'Objectives' not existing entities: if so, Russell's criticism of 'single objectives' fails, and is, further, inconsistent. For he regards 'objects' or 'elements' in a judgment as mental; if so, why not objectives? (ζ) 'Correspondence' with what is outside thought (*a*) leads to agnosticism, and (*b*) does not *describe* truth.

B

§ 4. *Mr. Russell's later theory. Statement.*

§ 5. *Criticism of Mr. Russell's later theory.* (α) Dualism clearer, but not wholly so. Difficulties involved through obscurity of this. (β) Russell dismisses difficulty that correspondence of mental and real involves 'gulf,' and maintains knowing is an external relation. (γ) Leaving this, the objective of belief is neither 'mental' nor 'real,' but real-as-thought-of. (δ) This escapes 'gulf' of dualism, also subjectivism. (ε) *E.g.* of absurdity of regarding contents as merely mental. Words and sensations are signs or symbols, (ζ) as Russell admits. (η) Transitiveness or 'transparency' of contents. (θ) Difficulties if objective regarded as fact, *e.g.* 'that to-day is Tuesday.' (ι) A fuller analysis of what objective really is. (κ) Negative facts not tenable, and their supposition further makes correspondence impossible. (λ) 'Copying by images of facts' does not describe truth.

§ 6. *Images.*—(α) The existence of images cannot be maintained. (β) Laird criticised on this.

§ 7. *General concluding remarks.*—(α) If images denied, correspondence fails, and further, leaves perception unaccounted for, or (β) if not, involves 'representative perception.' (γ) Russell avoids this by 'knowledge by acquaintance' theory.

§ 8. *Is correspondence a useless concept?*—It is, in a very strictly defined sense, useful as a criterion, but does not describe nature of truth.

CHAPTER VI

PAGE

CRITICAL REALISM AND THE SENSE DATUM . . . 121

§ 1. *Introduction.*

§ 2. *Statement of Critical Realism.*

§ 3. *Criticism.*—(α) Inconsistency between 'essences' as 'agreeing' and as 'identical with' characters of reality leads to disaster at the outset. (β) Effort of Critical Realism to rebut neo-realistic doctrine that we know existence, leads to separation of essence and existence. (γ) But Critical Realists 'sit on the fence.' The true 'datum' is the physical world itself, and what we are immediately conscious of is the content or objective or appearance. (δ) What we know in sense are not logical universals but particular qualities. (ε) If this is so, opposition between knowledge and 'intuition' breaks down. To oppose them is to deny that intuition is knowledge; this is the fiasco of Critical Realism. (ζ) Intuition is simply unanalysed direct knowledge of reality. (η) Uncertainty as to whether knowledge is direct or not, leads really to an agnostic 'copy theory.'

§ 4. *Critical Realism and the Datum.*—What *is* the Sense Datum? (α) Quotations illustrating inconsistencies. (β) My view of the datum as objectivity rather than immediate content. (γ) Critical Realism rejects common sense, but this is in fact truer, with strict modifications. (δ) The 'datum' (in the Critical Realist's sense) is neither physical, psychical, nor logical, but is an 'appearance,' a synthetic product or function. (ε) Summary of conditions affecting datum or content. (ζ) Mind is directly and continuously related to the physical object. (η) Appearances not entities 'like' what they represent. *Qua* 'like' they are the objects appearing undistorted. *Qua* 'unlike,' they are syntheses of such heterogeneous factors that comparison cannot be made. (θ) Images again. (ι) Plan.

CHAPTER VII

THE SENSE DATUM (*continued*) 148

§ 1. *Introduction.*—(α) The usual assumption of data as simple entities. Examples. (β) Problem defined. (γ) Terminology. (δ) Broad on 'sensible appearance.'

§ 2. *Dr. Moore on Judgments of Perception.*—(α) Statement. (β) Criticism. Identification of datum with, *e.g.*, surface of inkstand makes error impossible. Sense datum is, on the contrary, an interpretation. We judge about facts, not data. (γ) In the 'tree' example it is the '*tree*,' not the *datum* (or content), which *seems* smaller. If this is so, Moore's view destroys itself.

§ 3. *Have 'visual sense data' size?*—(α) Difficulties in maintaining they have not. (β) 'Visual size' means commonly, imaginary projection upon an arbitrarily placed imaginary plane, but this affords no basis for measurement. (γ) The translation of three dimensions into two in

PAGE

'pure vision' is not projection on a plane, but simply the way the eye sees real things. The 'plane' is an invention of artists and philosophers. (δ) This being so, only real things *appear* bigger or smaller, and it is misleading to say appearances or data *are* bigger or smaller. Only sophisticated persons and abstract thinkers make this mistake. Appearances or data are not entities. If we recognise this, many contemporary problems appear artificial. (ε) Hicks quoted.

§ 4. *Prof. Hicks' view of sense content.*—(α) Statement. (β) Advantage of this view is that it takes knowledge concretely, act with object, so that neither sensum nor 'act' are self-contained entities.

§ 5. *Prof. Broad's view discussed.*—(α) Three reasons why sensa thought to be mental, rejected. (1) That they are private. Broad says this might be dependent on physiological conditions. But, we may ask, what do we know of these? And do they explain all? (2) That sensa can be arranged in a continuous series, some of which seem unquestionably mental, and therefore the others. Broad distinguishes between bodily feelings and genuine sensations. I reply that this is artificial because both are cognitive, not of datum, but of objective world. (3) That sensa resemble images. Broad says images may depend on bodies, not on minds. Yet even supposing this, may they not be equally 'mental'? (β) Ways of describing the relation of sensa to objects. (γ) The 'selective' theory must be rejected, because, as we saw, sensa are products of heterogeneous factors, and not physical or 'ready-made.' (δ) Broad rejects, we must accept, some form of the 'creative theory,' sensa being products, not of body and objects, but of mind-and-body and objects. 'Creation-out-of-nothing' criticism refuted, for sensa not entities. (ε) Russell's views of the external world as construction of data, untenable. Laird cited.

§ 6. *Knowledge by acquaintance.*—(α) Our view of knowledge of the datum will be radically different from that of contemporary thinkers who regard datum as simply entity directly known. (β) Even to say datum is continuum not satisfactory, for, continuum is affected by selection of sense organs. To take datum as simple, and to say we *know* perfectly by acquaintance, is to substitute crude perceptual common sense for philosophy. (γ) The 'given' or datum is simply for serious scientific thought a problematic somewhat. (δ) Russell's account of 'knowledge by acquaintance' criticised. (ε) But, though there is no 'knowledge by acquaintance,' it does not follow that all knowledge is by description, which involves words. Hicks' view that discrimination always present, which issues in verbal judgment. I should agree on the whole. (ζ) Both sense datum, then, and 'knowledge by acquaintance,' are, epistemologically, abstractions.

CHAPTER VIII

KNOWLEDGE, TRUTH, AND ERROR 180

§ 1. *Prolegomena.*—(α) Previous theories unsatisfactory. (β) Knowledge has a subjective factor as well as (γ) an objective, and knowledge

PAGE

is self-transitive. Hoernlé quoted. To understand more fully, let us examine

§ 2. *The character of cognitive acts.*—(α) Various views. (β) Broad's analysis misleading because he takes whole cognitive process, including object, as *given*, and not as transitive. (γ) Knowledge is not relation, as Moore thinks, but involves consciousness of one.

§ 3. *Universals.*—(α) A. How do we come to know them? B. What is their nature: do they, *e.g.*, form a separate realm? (β) 'Subsistence.' Laird's criticism of the abstractionist and the word-symbol theories.

A. (γ) To abstract is to think not of a 'thin' particular or a self-contradictory complex, but of a definite something which symbolises a class. In *this* sense abstractionist and word-symbol theories are right. But that is not to say Universal *is* an abstraction or a symbol. What is it, then?

B. (δ) Stout's view that Universal is the distributive unity of a class endorsed. (ε) Summary. Advantage of approaching problem from these two points of view.

§ 4. *Truth.*—(α) Truth and knowledge. Are there 'kinds' of truth? On the whole, no, though an analysis of kinds of knowledge throws light on truth. (β) 'Prehension.' (γ) Knowledge is direct; mind, though it functions through instruments and involves processes, is in direct contact with reality. Stress on one or another aspects of knowledge leads to various errors of 'correspondence,' 'coherence,' neo-realism. (δ) Correspondence and coherence are complementary *tests*, but do not describe truth of knowledge, for knowledge 'gets through' to reality.

§ 5. *The objective and subjective aspects of knowledge and truth.*—(α) Kinds of knowledge means normally kinds of objects known. Scientific distinguished from artistic and religious objects, which are referred to in next chapter. (β) Reciprocal influence of personal character and knowledge in which a person has interest. (γ) 'Personal' and 'impersonal' truth. (δ) Even 'impersonal' and 'scientific' truth is originally 'personal.'

§ 6. *Analysis of Truth and Error.*—(α) 'Perceptual' truth chosen as representative. (β) Problem of error not isolated from that of truth. (γ) Smith and Jones again. Smith right because he apprehends mentally the relevant *complex* fact of which 'this' appears. Jones wrong because though he mentally apprehends *facts* and thinks of them as a complex, yet does not mentally apprehend the relevant *complex* fact of which 'this' appears. (δ) Ways in which error may arise. (ε) Summary.

CHAPTER IX

NON-PROPOSITIONAL TRUTH 215

§ 1. *Introduction.*—(α) Usual view that propositional knowledge the only kind; relation of propositions to mind forgotten. (β) Even if not forgotten, propositions *themselves* cannot fully express truth, but must be

PAGE

supplemented by feeling of wholes. (γ) But though propositions presuppose felt wholeness, they do not *express* it. Is there any other way of *expressing* wholeness? (δ) Expressions in art may do so. Difficulties.

§ 2. *Art and truth.*—(α) The double fact of man's organic unity with, and distinction from, reality. (β) The aesthetic emotion is (as opposed to abstract science) an intense inner experience of reality. Art expresses reality in its *internal* relations. (γ) Though art chosen here as example, conduct too should be inner expressiveness. (δ) Assertion and expression contrasted. All truth is a function of mind (at least) and usually involves *some* kind of 'expression.' (ε) But artistic symbolism is more expressive than propositional assertion.

§ 3. *The nature of aesthetic experience.*—(α) The wholeness which art symbolises is not a mere particular, but a universal whole, stimulating the peculiar aesthetic emotion. (β) Example analysed. (γ) That description of experience not exaggerated corroborated by quoting mystics and poets.

§ 4. *The criterion of the truth of art.*—(α) Art can be true, but there is, as with science, no ready-made criterion. Anyhow it must be the truth of feeling. (β) If this is so, the test cannot be correspondence. Representationism rejected. (γ) The only test can be the aesthetic quality, the peculiar inner coherence, of complex feeling itself. (δ) This is manifest in the infinitely various concrete expressions of art. Various kinds of falsity in art.

§ 5. *Possible criticisms considered.*—(α) No apology for metaphor. Stace's general attack on intuition, rapture, etc., misplaced. Mystic experience is not philosophy, but philosophy is poorer if it ignores it, and only metaphors can describe it, or better, 'express' it. (β) Objection that to speak of truth of feeling is a mere analogy. Answer: truth is not property of thought solely *or* of feeling, but of knowledge in broadest sense. The relation of feeling to knowledge at the lower and the higher levels. In conclusion, aesthetic feeling is highly cognitive, and therefore capable of being true or false. And once again, its truth *is* its inner expressiveness of aesthetic harmony.

§ 6. *Conclusion.*—Beauty, knowledge, and truth.

INDEX 241

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

PHILOSOPHICAL history in the twentieth century has been largely a history of the analysis of knowledge and truth. It is not that philosophers have been occupied exclusively with problems of epistemology. The stimulus of the Gifford Foundation has had the important effect of preventing any exclusive specialisation by the ablest philosophic minds of the time, and sets them spinning those webs of larger cosmic speculation which is still, in spite of what Prof. Hoernlé[1] calls 'the idol of scientific method,' the main task and inspiration of philosophy. But beneath the metaphysical edifices there is the spade-work of careful and critical analysis of the canons and methods of the instruments of thought. It is not an accident that Bradley and Bosanquet published their Logics before their more constructive metaphysical works, and to-day it is again not merely by chance that Alexander examined Realism as a method of knowledge before employing it as a roadway to constructive ontology.

Yet underneath these criticisms of logic and methodology there lies, as ever, a spirit, what Bradley would call an 'instinct.' Indeed, when you mention Bradley's name (still, even in 1922, when it is current

[1] *Studies in Contemporary Metaphysics.*

to think of Absolutism as finished and done for, something of a thrill) you hit at the root of the matter, the trouble that troubled Pragmatism and the Realisms into being. For the main modern movement is a reaction against Bradley and his particular form of Idealism. G. E. Moore began it with his famous *Refutation of Idealism*, Pragmatism and Radical Empiricism carried it on in their own fashion, with 'back to the facts' as a watchword; and 'back to the facts' it has been ever since. The question of course arises, 'What are the facts?' because any philosophy worth its name is an investigation of facts. Facts are not the prerogative of the empiricist only, the idealist also takes them for what they seem worth, even although 'in the end' he may deny their plurality and accept only the capital-lettered Fact.

It is really, however, in the distinction between Fact and facts that the controversy begins, and the answer to the question as to what is fact is given. For both Idealist and Pragmatist it is experience, but of widely different sorts. Pragmatism and Radical Empiricism stand for the emphasis on my experience and yours, this, here, now. 'Let us take life as we find it,' cries the Pragmatist, 'put it together in pieces and see if it bears the marks of wholeness and completeness. If so, good and well, if not, let us take it as we find it. Let us make no previous assumptions about what really *must* be, a whole or a unity or a perfection, a good or a bad or a neutral or any other sort of world.' As Alexander, expressing the same spirit, if not the same philosophy, has characteristically said, "There is no room for 'must' in philosophy or in science, but only for facts and the implications of them."[1] For

[1] *Space, Time, and Deity*, vol. i. p. 47.

Absolute Idealism, on the other hand, the experience which we think so real because so intimate, dissolves away before the acids of logic into an appearance which is not able to sustain itself. The analysis of experience reveals its evanescence. Appearances contradict themselves, therefore they are not real. The principle of non-contradiction it is which is raised to the position of high court judge.

It is because they conceive Idealism as an attempt to solve off-hand *a priori* those ultimate problems of the Universe which are the burden of scientific philosophy, that Pragmatism, and later, the Realisms, have protested. How far the protest is justified it is not our task here to enquire. We only note this central fact which is familiar to every student of contemporary philosophy, the fact of the reaction from *a priori* ways of reasoning. What are the 'facts' of experience to be emphasised, depends, as we saw, partly upon individual temperament. To William James, a man of immense and winning vitality, the experienced fact of the will seemed to be central ; to Bergson, again, the living through of a life that is change is a key to epistemology, psychology, metaphysics. But within the reactions themselves are eddies, and from the Bergsonian reaction against Intellectualism there arises a reaction against his anti-intellectualism, an insistence that, although intellect cannot solve the world problems by almighty fiats, it is yet in its process of analysis and synthesis the very weapon of science itself, without which philosophy, including Bergson's own philosophy, is impossible. In New Realism we find the strongest emphasis, sometimes a too self-conscious emphasis, as of the newly emancipated, on the kind of facts which are the subject

matter of the natural sciences, including psychology. And, as is not unusual when science becomes erected into a philosophy, the tendency of New Realism is mainly materialistic. Science is nothing if not objective in spirit; it has, as commonly accepted, no interest in the instruments of knowledge. Consequently when the objective method of physical science is employed by philosophers and psychologists it is not unnatural that the instruments of knowledge, even mental experience itself, should be regarded just as so many objects and that knowledge itself should be thought of as a special kind of relation between objects. Or, on the other hand, there is the tendency to regard consciousness as the relation between objects and the nervous organism. Such a tendency leads almost inevitably to Behaviourism, the doctrine, originating in America, that external movements are the sole source of our knowledge of mind, which comes to mean in the hands of actual Behaviourists, that these movements are the sole realities; and thus the progression towards Materialism is completed. On this side of the Atlantic we have Mr. Bertrand Russell, who in 1914[1] told us that "ethical and religious motives . . . have been on the whole a hindrance to the progress of philosophy, and ought now to be consciously thrust aside by those who wish to discover philosophical truth," and who now would abolish the specifically mental if he could.

Divisions and labels are usually misleading and often obnoxious affairs, but it will be seen from the above thumb-nail sketch that Realism, which began mainly as a polemic against Idealism, has become

[1] *Herbert Spencer Lecture*, Oxford. Republished in *Mysticism and Logic*, pp. 97-98.

something more than a methodological protest; it has become a metaphysical tenet. No doubt the metaphysical element was always present. Now, however, it appears more marked. Old quarrels reassert themselves, and the present struggle is not so much the particular twentieth-century one of Realist and Idealist as the more ancient one in a new form, Materialism *versus* Spiritualism. I mean that the class of Realists which at first contained chiefly those in antagonism to Hegelian and Neo-Hegelian metaphysics with its Absolute Spiritualism (I avoid the term Idealism in this connection) is now capable of containing every kind of metaphysician. Realism is the prevailing doctrine of the moment, and the next definite split will in all probability be between the Spiritualists and the Materialists within Realism, including in the term 'Materialists' (perhaps somewhat arbitrarily) the 'Neutral Monists.'

Although epistemological convictions find their outlet in metaphysics, it must be understood that I am not here primarily interested in metaphysics, but in epistemology. It is Epistemological Spiritualism (if one may coin such a word) or the doctrine that knowledge contains a specifically mental (or spiritual) factor which seems to me to be a crucial question. And the answer to the 'Epistemological Monism' of New Realism is to be seen in the latest brand of epistemology, Critical Realism. This theory is frankly dualistic. Recognising the extreme difficulty of accounting for error on any monistic theory, the Critical Realists account for it by an assertion of the existence of 'mental' and 'real,' mediated by what they call the 'datum' or 'essence.' There is more of the common-sense point of view in Critical Realism

than in New Realism. Of its validity I shall have much more to say in the sequel.

We shall find that the views as to the nature of matter, mind, and their relations, turn very much around the problem of the nature of the datum (chiefly the sense datum, because, for realism, sense perception is crucial). Is the datum 'mental' or 'real'? If mental, is it the sole knowable object, or does it point to an existence beyond itself, or are 'mental' and 'material' but ways in which a neutral stuff organises itself? If the datum is 'real,' does it give us true knowledge, and if so, how is error possible? Or is the datum neither mental nor material but simply the appearance of things? These are perplexing questions, their very formulation is a matter of great difficulty and quite frankly open to many sorts of criticism, merely because they do not any of them represent clear-cut antitheses. Terminology is in such a state of flux, words mean such violently opposite things to different thinkers, that he would be a bold man who imagines he can with impunity use such words as 'datum,' 'mental,' 'material,' 'knowledge,' in any wide or general sense. They have no wide or general sense. Each term is like the broken pieces of a single ship drifting in the cross-currents of conflicting opinion. The only safe generalisation is that there is opposition and conflict.

The problem has, of course, its historical background. It goes back to the old trouble of representative perception, a difficulty which, I think, has never been wholly overcome. Given the dilemma of representative perception, modern theories attempt to avoid it by seizing one horn or the other. Idealism, developed historically after Locke through Berkeley, Hume, Kant, Hegel, avoids it first by denying a world

correspondent to the ideas, and then asserting positively that the ideas are the things, that, in crude language, the world is 'made' of ideas. New Realism, on the other hand, cuts out the ideas, and makes knowledge, as we said, either a relation of things, or at best, a relation of things to the nervous organism. But even here, although to be a proper Realist you must regard these things as non-mental, as Prof. Alexander does, yet you have a curious veering towards idealism in a Phenomenalism like Mr. Russell's. Critical Realism tries to avoid the dilemma by restating it in a new way, which tends to separate, not so much 'representation' from 'object,' as 'essence' from 'thing.' We are given the 'essence' of the thing but not its existence.

Mr. Joshua C. Gregory, in a recent article in *Mind*[1] says, referring to Alexander, "If the thinker begins with memory and is dominated by the circumstances of memory he will incline to a theory of perception which accepts these circumstances as typical; if he begins with perception he will incline to model memory on perception rather than perception on memory." If for memory we substitute the more general term 'thought,' we can understand how for a rationalist like Descartes perception was modelled on representation, and how to-day for the New Realists who stress perception, the object in memory must be thought of as actually present as it would be if it were being perceived.

I return to representative perception because the real problems which it raises do not appear to me to have been solved in any satisfactory manner. We have already noticed how Critical Realists hold that we perceive, not existing things, but data which are

[1] July 1921, "Realism and Imagination."

essences. And that is indeed the view of New Realism except for the important provision (which raises its own familiar difficulties) that the data are the things. Indeed, the strongest modern tendency seems to be to reduce everything to terms of data. There are thus lying in wait the dangers both directly of representative perception itself, and indirectly of accepting one of its horns without examining critically enough the alternatives of the dilemma itself, the nature of representations and percepts.

But graver, commoner still, are the dangers of what we may call ' representative conception,' a fallacy which I hope to expose more fully in the sequel. Strict New Realists must, we say, try to avoid that difficulty by holding that in thought and memory the object is as bodily present as it is in perception. But there are realists and realists, and there are realists who are realists about some things and not realists about other things, and these are the most baffling sort of realists. Such is Mr. Bertrand Russell. In *The Analysis of Mind*, p. 20, he says, " I have been in the past a realist, and I remain a realist as regards sensation, but not as regards memory or thought." Later on in the same book he expounds a theory in which truth consists in a correspondence between the relations of images and the relations of objects. To think truly of a familiar room in which the window is to the left of the door, is, in Mr. Russell's view, to have images of the window and the door, the image of the window being to the left of the image of the door. So when we think we are thinking of a familiar room we are only really thinking of a representation or copy of it. This is what I have called the fallacy of ' representative conception,' or, if desired, in this case,

'representative memory.' There are many philosophers who would deny Mr. Russell's theory in this form, but I am doubtful whether the real nature of the difficulty which underlies it, namely the problem as to the nature of thoughts or representations or images, has been generally recognised. We have the same tendency, carefully suppressed on the whole, but popping up like a jack-in-the-box once or twice, in Critical Realism. In an Essay on *Knowledge and its Categories*[1] Prof. Strong says, "I can see no objection to a critical-copy theory in the case of memory. The content can be *like* its object." True, we have the blessed word 'critical,' but until we have enquired very seriously whether there is any meaning at all in a content being *like* its object, we shall make little progress in epistemological dualism.

We have seen enough, then (though it is impossible in such generalisations to make complicated issues clear), to convince us that the ways of escape usually made from representative perception and representative conception appear, at any rate, to lead us into other blind alleys. What is required is a critical examination of perception and thought themselves, together with an attempt to gain a clear insight into the nature of the object of thought.

I propose to make some such examination in the following pages. There is nothing original or new or unique in such a proposal. The theories I shall examine are of course themselves simply constructive criticisms of the nature of knowledge. All I shall do will be simply to examine some of their assumptions which seem to me to be dogmatic or erroneous. My main intention, however, is constructive; I do not

[1] *Essays in Critical Realism*, p. 286.

propose to offer a critical history of modern movements in epistemology. I shall therefore select, it may seem arbitrarily, aspects of problems which interest me and which seem to me to be important for the purpose of constructive theory. With these and no further observations I may remark that I shall omit consideration of Pragmatism altogether, and that I shall devote less space to the Coherence Theory of truth and to New Realism than the controversial interest they have aroused might seem to warrant. Again, I have not referred in any way to the ' new ' Italian Idealism.

A word in conclusion as to the words ' truth ' and ' knowledge.' It seems perhaps trite to remark that knowledge is very intimately connected with truth. But it is certainly a fact that historically in our own time the problems of knowledge (by which I mean knowing, and not merely the system of things known) and of truth have not been regarded as different aspects of the same thing, but, in practice at any rate, as separate. Had truth been conceived as a function or quality of knowing (which I hope to show it is), we should have heard less, I think, of correspondence and coherence as accounts of the nature of truth, though the latter no doubt stresses the systematic character of the contents of knowledge. It is anyhow less plausible, though quite certainly not untenable, to speak of the trueness inseparable from knowing itself as a correspondence, or as a coherence, than it is to speak of truth, conceived as it usually is, as correspondence or coherence. Correspondence or coherence appear to be tests or criteria of true knowing itself rather than adequate accounts of the nature of true knowing itself. If we can regard truth as adjectival to knowing, as the property of knowing, and can account for

knowing in terms which will avoid the fallacies of representative perception and conception, and which will at the same time explain error, we shall find that it gives us, not only a more concrete view of truth, but a view which will include in its scope those kinds of truth usually regarded as metaphorical. I mean the kinds of truth which seem to be attained by artists, poets, men of religion, and all creative geniuses. Truth here is not in its nature correspondence or coherence but the quality of a vital apprehension, through imagination, of realities which seem to lie beyond the ken of ordinary human mortals.

To the task of criticism and construction I now turn. I shall first examine epistemologies of a monistic character, involving such radically different points of view as Absolute Idealism and New Realism. We shall then turn to ' Epistemological Dualism ' as seen in Mr. Bertrand Russell and very differently in the Critical Realists. From that we shall go on to enquire into the nature of the sense datum, following this with an attempt to construct an independent theory of true knowledge, and closing with some remarks on the implications of our view upon the wider outlook in art and life.

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CHAPTER II

THE COHERENCE VIEW OF TRUTH

§ 1. *Introduction.*

§ 2. *Brief account of the Coherence theory.*

§ 3. *Criticism of the Coherence theory.*—(α) Coherence valuable as stressing inner experienced whole of truth, as opposed to scientific abstractions. (β) Note on my view of relation of judgment to proposition. (γ) But whilst Bradley's protest against 'floating ideas' is sound, he runs to the opposite extreme in identifying thought with reality. (δ) Difficulties it leads to. (ε) Theory of judgment criticised. If the 'prehensile' nature of ideas recognised, the predicate is just as ideal—and as real—as the subject. This does not imply reality is mental. (ζ) The so-called 'gap' between thought and reality is the outcome of the false ideal that thought seeks to *be* reality. But even in feeling, whether it be of the lowest kind or that of the Absolute, there is distinction between feeler and felt. And it is the felt, or Reality, which is coherent, and not the feeling. Coherence means, then, concrete coherence, which demands differences which do not (as with Bradley) disappear in feeling. (η) Again, if truth is property of *act* of judgment about coherent reality, there is no *intrinsic* reason why a single judgment should not be true. Coherence is a test of the truth of judgments, though coherence of judgments is of course derived from reality. (θ) Internal and external relations. As well as the Whole of Reality there are wholes within it, both natural and artificial. As One, all things are internally related, as Many, externally. There are objective grades or degrees of internality, but much dispute can be avoided by defining wholes. (ι) If Many is accepted with the One, there is no reason why judgment about parts should not be (though abstractly) quite true. (κ) *Meaning* may be (1) 'objective' (as when we speak of the meaning of *things*), or (2) 'subjective' (as when a knowing mind marks out some area of reality for thought). If the mind is (*a*) finite, the marked area will be finite; if (*b*) infinite, infinite. Always meaning involves relation of a mind to reality. Application to Joachim. (λ) From what we have said, it follows there are no 'degrees' either of truth or reality. (μ) Plan.

§ 1. Introduction

This, the first theory which we have to examine, is by far the most systematic in itself, and the most far-reaching in its historical influence. Within itself it is a metaphysics as well as an epistemology—a fact which makes it difficult to treat adequately within an essay such as this—whilst its championship on the part of Bradley and his followers has been, as I indicated in the Introduction, the main gendering cause of other theories, pragmatic and realistic. Bradley and his ' block universe,' the ' tender-mindedness ' of monistic philosophers, these and their kind were the objects attacked by William James with all the forces of his overwhelming mental virility. Realists again, of all brands, begin as a rule by demolishing Idealism. Indeed, as we said, to write the history of philosophy in the 'nineties and in the twentieth century would be, very largely, to give an account of Bradley and his influence.

The task before us, even if we limit it, as we must do very definitely, is an exceptionally difficult one. It is easy to dismiss with a gesture Absolute Coherence as a theory, and think that some difficult task has been cleverly accomplished. It is particularly easy to do so at the present time because Idealism as a theory has gone almost completely out of fashion, its advocates being regarded with the peculiar interest which surrounds surviving specimens of a bygone age. As a political ' Diehard ' to a Labour man, so a Bradleian to the average contemporary philosopher. There is no question but that the thing has sunk beyond reason into prejudice, which may account for the fact that its critics often simply do not take the trouble to under-

stand the theory they are questioning. The language of the Idealist is one, theirs is another. Whatever our conclusions, therefore, we must at least try to understand what the Idealist does mean by truth before condemning it because it does not express what *we* mean.

In what follows I shall be obliged both by the exigencies of space and the demands of clarity to describe and treat the theory in a very broad, general, perhaps it may seem superficial, way. Any one who is in the least familiar with the literature will know that to enter into details—important details it may be—to weigh carefully the evidence of exponent and critic alike, is wholly out of the question.

§ 2. Brief Account of the Coherence Theory

I said that the language of Idealists and their critics on the subject of truth is apt to be different. We must realise at the outset that truth for the Idealist is an ideal and not a property of any actual judgments, or of propositions which are actual or even possible. When the Idealist says 'truth,' he means truth for an All-Knower, for an Absolute Experience, in which all that is appears as the expression of one principle which is spiritual, in which appearances are transformed by being viewed *sub specie aeternitatis*. When the critic, on the other hand, says 'truth' and insists that it is absolute, he is referring to the 'truth' of judgments about a carefully defined portion of the world, and not to the whole. In this controversy, which is often implicit rather than explicit, the honours must go to the Idealist rather than to his opponent, in so far as the Idealist defines his terms and his opponent does not. For, while the Idealist is careful to explain his

distinction between Absolute Truth and the truth of finite judgments, admitting truth of a sort for these, the critic on the other hand, firmly chained to the finite, convinced, as he thinks, of the infallibility of science, refuses frequently even to contemplate the notion of an Absolute Truth of a different kind, contenting himself as a rule with pointing the finger of scorn. Denying the ideal, it is small wonder that he altogether fails to understand how finite truths might be related to such. If we are to criticise the coherence view of truth we must do so from its own point of view, exhibiting if possible its discrepancies from within, using 'truth' in the sense that Idealists use it, and only then enquiring whether it is a just use, and whether it really 'explains' our more ordinary notions.

With these preliminary remarks, we may go on to give a short account of coherence. Joachim describes it to begin with as 'conceivability,' which he defines as follows,[1] "To 'conceive' means for us to think out clearly and logically, to hold many elements together in a connection necessitated by their several contents. And to be 'conceivable' means to be a 'significant whole,' or a whole possessed of meaning for thought. A 'significant whole' is such that all its constituent elements reciprocally involve one another, or reciprocally determine one another's being as contributory features in a single concrete meaning." A Centaur is inconceivable because there is internal clashing between the elements which constitute it, as well as between its nature and that of the world we know. Conceivability or system is best exemplified in the systems of science or philosophy.

[1] *The Nature of Truth*, H. H. Joachim, p. 66.

The most ordinary way in which truth begins to manifest itself as truth is in judgments, whose aim is to qualify reality ideally. This means for the Idealist that in judgment we pick out adjectives from the real, we separate ' whats ' from the ' that ' which is always in the end undefined Reality, and in the act of judgment we reattach what Bradley calls the ' loosened ' adjectives to the real. In the ' loosening ' process, however, which is what would usually be called abstraction, the loosened adjective becomes inadequate to express its substantive, for the reason that in the *being* of the substantive, that is, in reality itself, that which has become by the ' loosening,' abstracting process, an isolated adjective, was *internally* related to and modified by other factors. These factors are not confined merely to any particular area of reality which we may choose to call an ' object,' but, because reality is infinitely ramifying, they extend throughout the whole of that reality. Particular ' reals ' are but ' moments ' in one all-inclusive Reality. As the judgment, by its abstracting process, at once renders itself incapable of expressing fully this reality, and at the same time sets before itself the expression of reality as an ideal, it will be seen that there is an internal contradiction in the very idea of judgment. A single judgment is inadequate to express the reality: it must expand, it must be supplemented by other judgments, it must develop into the system of judgments we know in science or philosophy, so that as far as possible the predicates may agree with, may express adequately, the subject, which when explored becomes not ' this ' nor ' that,' but Reality itself, the Whole.

But even yet the demands of truth remain unsatisfied. For the system of judgments, however com-

prehensive and complete, is still but a string of abstractions asserting a plurality of predicates which are, as well as being abstract, unable in their plurality to express the unity of reality. This is an example of what Bradley calls the 'gap' between truth and Reality. And he believes it to be an inner defect of truth that it cannot even in the end, in the Absolute, reach Being, because thought is an approach from without and is not existence. But apart from the question of the Absolute, it is evident in the meantime that the truth of the judgment cannot attain its ideal and must remain in its inner nature partially inexpressive of full reality.

The ideal of truth is something other, then, than what we are usually accustomed to think may be realised in judgments. That other is being itself, and the question we shall have to ask is, is this demand that truth shall attain immortality by 'committing suicide'[1] justified? Is it deeply true, or is it just nonsense to say that truth must become other than itself to realise itself? Is it losing the life to save it? In the meantime let us return to the exposition. Joachim, in a later and more developed passage, expresses the ideal for truth in words somewhat different from those we quoted. "The image of a chain . . . is a sheer distortion of the conception of 'coherence' or 'conceivability,' which, on my view, characterises truth. The ideal of knowledge for me is a system, not of truths, but of truth. 'Coherence' cannot be attached to propositions from the outside; it is not a property which they can acquire by colligation, whilst retaining unaltered the truth they possessed in isolation."[2] He then goes on to show that this systematic coherence is

[1] *E.g.* Bradley, *Appearance and Reality*, 2nd ed., p. 70.
[2] *The Nature of Truth*, p. 72.

a wholly different thing from (although in the end it includes it as well) the static 'consistency,' based upon the principle of non-contradiction, of formal logic. Coherence is *concrete* coherence, more or less imperfectly exemplified in systems of life, organism, self-fulfilment; it is not a mere aggregation nor any combination of truths. Coherence is living unity. "A 'significant whole' is an organised living experience, self-fulfilling and self-fulfilled. Its organisation *is* the process of its self-fulfilment, and the concrete manifestation of its individuality. . . ." [1] "Now there can be one *and only one* such experience: or *only one* significant whole, the significance of which is self-contained in the sense required. For it is *absolute* self-fulfilment, *absolutely* self-contained significance, that is postulated, and nothing short of absolute individuality —nothing short of *the* completely whole experience— can satisfy this postulate." [2] This is clearly not my knowledge nor yours. It is clearly their unattainable ideal, though some systems of knowledge attain nearer to it than others, this being measurable roughly by the criterion of comprehensiveness.

We are thus led to the doctrine of 'degrees of truth.' All judgments, whether perceptive, narrative, or scientific universals, are true in a relative sense only, the scientific being more true than the others. The ordinary view that truth consists of a system of solid truths has been criticised: if the criticism is valid it will follow that any particular judgment is true only in so far as it reflects or expresses the whole Truth. The Idealist does not distinguish between the *whole truth* and a judgment's being *wholly true*. That is to say, a judgment would not be wholly true unless it

[1] *The Nature of Truth*, p. 76. [2] *Ibid.* p. 78.

were the whole truth. But because a judgment is about a part which has a context, it cannot be true because (in addition to the fact that it is 'about' it) it does not take into account the influence of that context. To say (taking as example the narrative or historical judgment) that Caesar crossed the Rubicon in 49 B.C. is not fully true, because the judgment only expresses a part of a widely significant situation understood variously by different individuals (see below), a full appreciation of which is essential to the understanding of the 'fact.' This 'brute fact' is but an item in a concrete situation 'pregnant with significance': it finds its meaning in that situation. On the subjective side the judgment must have meaning. You may, says the Idealist, restrict this to the bare meaning of the words, but if you do so you are artificially and arbitrarily limiting it for reasons of personal convenience. You know very well the thing means more than that. It extends over an indefinably wide area. And its truth is just its meaning in the widest and most universal sense. So, "To the boy who is learning the multiplication table $3^2 = 9$ possesses probably a minimum of meaning. It is simply one item of the many which he is obliged to commit to memory. . . . But to the arithmetician $3^2 = 9$ is perhaps a short-hand symbol for the whole science of arithmetic as known at the time."[1] "Though 3×3 are 9 and remains 9 unalterably, the significance of the judgment—*and therefore its truth*—depends upon the numerical system in its totality, and ultimately upon the character of the Universe within which the numerical system is a necessary subject of human thought."[2] Judgments are pieces of 'concrete thinking': they affirm the

[1] Joachim, *op. cit.* p. 93. [2] *Ibid.* p. 103.

meaning which cannot be divorced from context, and the truth of the meaningful judgment cannot exist apart from the context of its object matter, a context which judgments can never quite fully express, because they are abstractions from, and are not identical with, reality.

Let us conclude this imperfect sketch by a quotation from Bradley describing in typical language the relation between truth and Reality. "Reality for me . . . is one individual Experience. It is a higher unity above our immediate experience, and above all ideality and relations. It is above thought and will and aesthetic perception. But though transcending these modes of experience, it includes them all fully. Such a whole is Reality, and, as against this whole, truth is merely ideal. It is indeed never a mere idea, for certainly there are no mere ideas. It is Reality appearing and expressing itself in that one-sided way which we call ideal. Hence truth is identical with Reality in the sense that in order to perfect itself, it would have to become Reality. On the other side, truth, while it is truth, differs from Reality and, if it ceased to be different, would cease to be true. But how in detail all this is possible, cannot be understood."[1] Here we have the essential germ plasm of Absolute Idealism, budding forth into offspring of amazing paradox.

§ 3. Criticism of the Coherence Theory

(*a*) Are these paradoxes of Idealism merely melodramatic as some think, or do they adequately suggest the inner nature of truth and reality?

[1] Bradley, *Essays on Truth and Reality*, pp. 343-44.

We have to admit, in the first place, that the coherence theory cuts deep. Its value lies in the realisation that there is an inner side to truth, that reality can only be comprehended through *experience*, and that truth cannot be described as an external relation between propositions and reality, nor by reference to any theory involving the image of a 'chain.' Reality in its concrete wholeness transcends the attempt to comprehend it adequately in pieces. This is in the first place particularly true of single judgments which exhibit their 'torn edges'; it is in the second place true, though to a lesser degree, even of the system of judgments 'apperceived' by the scientific mind. The complete scientist may see (perhaps 'feel' is a better word) the whole system expressed in the tiniest detail, but the science itself as a whole is an abstraction: there are other spheres of thought and feeling within Reality with which it does not profess to deal. This is also true to a certain extent of wholes which are felt—*e.g.* aesthetic wholes. The symphony or the picture or the poem is not literally Reality. It is, however, probably as little true of aesthetic wholes as of any object of finite experience. For though a symphony is not itself literally the universe, there is in experiencing it, as those who have done so in a vital way well know, a *felt* sense of the universal. The aesthetic experience where it is at all vivid seems to bring us to a frame of mind where the limits of the finite body appear transcended, and the whole being is raised to a height, not of mere blind blank feeling, but of crystal-clear understanding when all things seem fused in unity. At these times the subtlest reasoning looks but a poor superficial thing, and the devotee cries, 'This is indeed Reality!' Intense emotion brings us an *experience*

which seems to transcend systems of propositions. We say:

> The rest may reason and welcome, 'tis we musicians know.[1]

It is significant that Bradley, although he urges that it is impossible for us to have a full knowledge of the Absolute Experience (for to know it would be to *be* it), yet maintains that we may best obtain our imperfect ideas of what that experience may be by thinking of wholes of feeling where there is diversity in unity, such as organic, aesthetic, and ethical wholes. Our experiences of these are experiences of inner unities which seem to sustain within themselves a living coherence of their own.

Bradley's theory of judgment is influenced by the all-important view that we are not severed from reality but are a part of it, realising its life and truth through our own life. It is because he thinks, rightly, of judgments as expressions of experience of a single Reality, that he maintains that the truth of judgments must come from the context which is the Whole. There are no merely 'floating ideas,' and judgment is not to string together 'psychical' ideas which correspond to reality. Judgment is the qualification of Reality by an idea which is itself a particular (therefore 'torn' and imperfect) experience of reality. That is vital, and we shall find reason later to censure other views for forgetting it.

(β) I may at this point as well as any other state very briefly the view of the relation of judgment to proposition which I shall assume throughout this book. A judgment I take to mean the affirmation of an interpretation by a mind of reality or some part of it. This asserted interpretation by mind is an analysis of

[1] R. Browning, *Abt Vogler*.

fact in which the fact (the subject) is qualified by an adjective. A judgment, then, is a cognitive act of mind, and involves relationship between mind and reality. The proposition is the verbal expression of the act of judgment.

I may say in defence of this latter statement that it need not imply, as Mr. W. E. Johnson, rejecting this statement, contends it does, that the proposition is *merely* verbal. The term 'expression' should guard sufficiently against that misinterpretation. A proposition is verbal, but it derives its meaning and its truth or falsity from the fact that it is the very expression of an act of living mind apprehending reality. In this particular respect I do not think I differ very greatly from from Mr. Johnson's own view. Mr. Johnson takes the judgment to be a mental happening, and applies the terms 'true' and 'false' to the mental assertive attitude,[1] and not primarily to the proposition or 'assertum,' from which he carefully distinguishes it, though insisting they are not separate. Let us assume, then, that the judgment is mental and the verbal propositional form is its natural expression.

(γ) To return to Bradley. Whilst there is important truth in Bradley's theory of judgment, and of truth as coherent experience, there are also grave, in some respects insoluble, difficulties in the way. To begin with the theory of judgment, it is not satisfactory to identify thought with existence as Bradley does, for example, when he says, "It is only by misunderstanding that we find difficulty in taking thought to be something less than reality."[2] (Of course when we press this the Idealist will quote the other side of the paradox at us, namely that thought is not really

[1] *Logic*, Part I. p. 3.

[2] *Appearance and Reality*, p. 162.

existence, but 'aspects' separated from it.) We have interpreted Bradley's protest against 'floating ideas' in the most favourable possible light, in order to show that truth is more soundly viewed as experience than as correspondence. Nevertheless, in his anxiety to avoid the notion that ideas 'float' or are merely 'psychical,' he runs to the opposite extreme in placing them in objective reality itself. His metaphors, such as "Judgment adds an adjective to reality, and this adjective is an idea because it is the quality made loose from its own existence, and is working free from its implication with that,"[1] have been frequently criticised.[2] Certainly, when Mr. Bradley says that the horse is a mammal, he is not 'harnessing his mental state to the beast between the shafts.' But it is equally true that he is not adding to the beast between the shafts the real quality of being a mammal, which quality has been 'loosened,' by some obscure occult or other process, from existence. Now it would be unfair to criticise metaphors, which are useful expedients, were it not for the fact that Mr. Bradley's meaning is not clear, and that the metaphors really do suggest what a passage we quoted said literally, namely, that the thoughts are actually identical with the realities. Strange,[3] who protests against the 'sticking of adjectives on to reality,' also points out that Bradley commits the same error in his doctrine of feeling. "Feeling is not a whole which is simply *there* or given, and which proceeds later to differentiate itself into self and not-self in a 'background of feeling' in which the original 'whole of feeling' persists. Feeling . . . means the reaching of some subject to cognise some object, although the

[1] *Appearance and Reality*, p. 164.

[2] See, *e.g.*, E. H. Strange, "Mr. Bradley's Doctrine of Knowledge," *Mind*, 1911.

[3] *Op. cit.*

object may be very vague: it means the feeler's feeling something. . . ."

(δ) The general identification of thought with existence leads to fundamental difficulties, *e.g.*, that error is real, though but partially, and that reality as well as truth has 'degrees.' It only mitigates the difficulty slightly if we remember that error is but partial truth, for it is almost equally difficult to regard truth as 'real.' If we modify it and say, not, thought is identical with existence, but that it is our apprehension of existence—a very different thing,—we shall avoid the Scylla of supposing 'ideas' to be merely psychical and the Charybdis of supposing them simply real: we shall be led to adopt a different theory of judgment, as well as different conclusions about the Absolute Experience and the nature of truth.

(ε) In the first place, as regards the theory of judgment, there is no particular reason for favouring the reality of the subject rather than the predicate. "Just as in 'this horse is a mammal' the predicate was not," says Mr. Bradley, "a fact, so most assuredly the subject is an actual existence."[1] But why? Are not both the subject and the predicate equally 'real' and equally 'ideal,' or better, are they not both the resultant of mind's contact with an independent real? The subject is not Reality in its existence nor is it a *mere* idea 'in my head,' but existing reality *as thought of*: the predicate is not a mere 'psychical idea' nor is it reality, but again it is reality *as thought of*. Bradley has been criticised (by Stout, I think) because he does not distinguish between the 'logical' and the 'psychical' idea. I doubt if this is wholly just, but if we are to use the ambiguous term 'idea' at all I should say that

[1] *Appearance and Reality*, p. 164.

its logical (I suppose that means here 'cognitive') sense is by far the most important, and that an idea is essentially prehensile or actively cognitive in its character. An idea is simply an instance of the mind's going out to grasp some particular reality. *If* we use the term in this way, remembering that reality is just as important in cognition as the mental factor, there is no harm, I think, in admitting the plain fact that both subject and predicate are ideal.

But that is not to imply for a moment that reality is necessarily mental, certainly it is not so because to be known we must have an idea of it. The mind as cognitive is, as we said, prehensile through its ideas, it grasps a reality, and there are always two factors clearly present, the knower who thinks and whose thoughts grasp the thing known. If we see this we must recognise that there must be a clear distinction between truth and reality, which distinction has profound epistemological consequences for Idealism if it can be carried through to the Absolute Experience, for then it will follow, not only that truth does not as a matter of fact *become* reality, but that it does not even 'seek' to become reality.

(ζ) We are constantly in idealistic writings coming across references to the 'impotence,' the 'serious loss and falling off' of truth; to thought's 'suicide' in attaining, *per impossibile*, truth; to the 'gap' which thought seeks to bridge, but cannot; to the 'defect' that the predicate cannot be identical with the subject, and yet live. "Truth," says Mr. Bradley, "content with nothing short of reality, has, in order to remain truth, to come short for ever of its own ideal and to remain imperfect."[1] Joachim more than once admits

[1] *Essays*, p. 251.

that the diversity between thought and reality seems to suggest some kind of 'correspondence,' but argues that this is because it assumes an artificial and unreal severance between thinker and reality. He very frankly admits, however, that there is a sense in which the correspondence theory seems true, that "a continuous passage must be shown from that conception of things, which renders the coherence notion possible, to the dualistic conception which is involved in correspondence," [1] and that because that passage cannot be made, "the coherence notion of truth may thus be said to suffer shipwreck at the very entrance of the harbour . . . a disaster which is inevitable." [2] But all this is true only if we refuse to admit that knowledge, even of the most perfect kind, involves a distinction between knower, *qua* knower, and known, *qua* known. The Idealists forget this because they begin with the ideal, with the experience of the Absolute, to whose *experience* they think the term coherence can be adequately applied. They assume, quite fallaciously, I think, that because the Absolute is the All and there are no objects external to the Absolute, and because again the experience of the Absolute is an immediate, felt, inner experience,—therefore subject and object are epistemologically one. But, emphatically, that does not follow. Metaphysical unity in this case does not involve epistemological unity, and any feeling, whether it be of the lowest or of the highest kind, is a feeling *of* something. Of course it may be said that to the Absolute we must not apply such anthropomorphic ways of describing knowledge, but I reply that if you are to use the terms at all (as is freely done by Idealists) you must apply them consistently; and

[1] *The Nature of Truth*, p. 120. [2] *Ibid.* p. 271.

'feeling' or 'immediate experience' involves respectively a felt or an experienced, distinct from it. The ambiguity of the terms 'feeling' and 'experience' casts its blurred shadows upon the conception of coherence. The Idealists talk of the 'experience' as coherent, as coherence. If this is to be true at all it must mean the experienced which is coherent and not the experiencing, which is an active life, obtaining all its content from its objects. *Truth then will not be this (ambiguous) inner coherence at all: truth will be the experiencing of a reality which is coherent in a very different sense, in the more usual concrete sense which all of us understand more or less imperfectly.* The world we know is a system of law and order, involving as well, perhaps, the reality of values, the whole worked into a harmony which is beyond human comprehension. *That* will be 'coherent,' and the full experiencing of it (which is 'coherent' only by metaphor, by transferred epithet) will be God's truth. It is not the feeling, but the felt, which is coherent. This distinction has profound theological consequences into which we cannot enter, and it may also enable us to begin to comprehend what Bradley (for whom appearances are merged, if not lost, in Absolute Feeling) fails to understand, namely, how the differences remain 'in the end,' how the appearances are 'saved.' For felt experience does not actually fuse the differences of the real. Even though Reality, the known, be through and through spiritual, evolving its infinite concrete variety by its inner purposes, that variety would remain to Reality, the Knower, unfused by the fires of feeling, though 'seen all things in one' by that infinite Knower.

(η) For the theory of finite knowledge, on the other hand, there are important consequences which follow

from the doctrine that truth is not, even as an ideal, Being or Existence, but the property of an act of mind which apprehends being. To some of these consequences we shall return in later chapters. Others concern the implications of the coherence theory itself. For example, if coherence is the character of reality primarily, and not of truth except in a secondary sense (to the consideration of which we shall turn immediately) it will follow that a judgment may by itself be quite true, that it need not necessarily contain in it the seeds of error. Truth will be a property of the act of judgment or of the experiencing side of an asserted experience, and there is no intrinsic reason why a single judging or an experiencing should not by itself be quite true. We may and do *test* the truth of our experiencing by coherence, by reference to the system of knowledge, asking whether the content of our experience is one which will harmonise with the system of contents of other experiences. If it does, that gives some guarantee, though not an infallible one, that our content is an apprehension of reality undistorted by subjective or other factors, of which factors there are various kinds. All this, however, is but the external test of truth and does not describe its inner nature. The attainment, the realisation of truth, is essentially a personal affair ; it is a direct, immediate, apprehension of reality. This is, I think, what Prof. Stout, in an old article in *Mind*,[1] means when he says, " In the end, truth cannot be recognised merely through its coherence with other truth. In the absence of immediate cognition, the principle of coherence would be like a lever without a fulcrum." Or again, " To affirm that all cognition is mediate in this sense [which

[1] 1908, " Immediacy, Mediacy and Coherence," p. 33.

he defines] leads inevitably to a vicious circle. If mediate cognition could only be mediated by cognitions which are themselves merely mediate, knowledge could never get a start. It is as if one should say that in building a wall every brick must be laid on the top of another brick and none directly on the ground."

Of course truth is 'coherent' in a secondary and derivative sense, as we hinted. We cannot rest by saying merely that truth is the abstract apprehensiveness of a colourless cognitive act. Knowledge is of objects: cognitive acts are concrete, and they are concrete because they deal with a various reality which is itself concrete. And we can truly speak of the 'coherence' of judgments if we remember that the contents of judgments which 'cohere' are apprehensions of reality from whence their coherence comes. But as reality is only concretely 'coherent' and is not simply 'coherence,' so in a derivative sense judgments and experience may be coherent (though their being coherent *is* not their truth, but only its test) but are not 'coherence' merely. There are involved real elements, as well as relations between them.

(*θ*) This brings us to the very knotty problems of 'internal' relations, of the apparent relativity to which coherence leads us, of 'meaning' and its relation to truth, of whether there are truths which can be quite true (a problem which we have already touched upon) or only degrees of Truth, of whether we can properly speak at all of 'degrees' of Reality.

Taking the problem of 'internal' relations first, it follows from the doctrine that expansion of truth modifies narrower 'truth,' that complete truth transcends all finite distinctions and that (though the Idealists dislike the word) these 'disappear' in the

Absolute. This on its objective side means that, since 'parts' or 'terms' are constituted by their relations (however Bradley may deny it, it does, I think, come to that in the end), they have no reality without them. The terms and parts which we think real are the outcome of our finite abstractions. Did we know all, they would be so transformed by the interpenetration of their relations that it is difficult to see how they too would not be 'lost.' The extreme opposite position is taken by Russell, who holds that there is a plurality of simples united by relations which are wholly external to them and which do not in any way modify their terms. The question is, can we accept either of these extreme positions?

Now there are two kinds of wholes which we can distinguish within reality, one artificial, the other real. It is a platitude, on the one hand, that many objects are determined by our purely subjective interests. Examples are rhythmic patterns in the ticking of the clock or castles in the fire. On the other hand, it is sound empirical common sense to suppose that the different orders of nature, *e.g.* animal, vegetable, mineral, and their particular embodiments such as horses or cabbages or pieces of quartz, are real and not merely subjective divisions. Because there are no gaps in nature, because nothing is isolated from the rest of things, there is no reason for supposing that there are no real wholes. But again it is true (although we are not here called upon to make sweeping metaphysical statements) that the real wholes which we discern have their organic place within the wider whole which is the Universe. Monism in *this* sense, anyhow, appears to be more satisfactory than mere Pluralism.

All this has an important bearing upon the problem of internal and external relations. If there were one Whole only, and the objects and divisions into smaller wholes were entirely a function of anthropomorphic or subjective interests, then 'internal' relations would be truer than 'external,' but to say that there are no relations would be truer than either. If there were a mere Many, on the other extreme, there would be no relations either. That is, mere internal relations in a world where there are no 'parts' external to one another, are as inconceivable as are mere external relations where there is no unity underlying the parts. But if there were a One containing Many, then in so far as they were a Many they would be externally related, and so far as they were expressions of the One they would be internally related to it and so to one another.

And this is so. Ultimately all relations *are* internal because everything is an expression of one Universe; ultimately all relations *are* external, because that One Universe realises itself in a distinct Many which are really external. Those who swear by the one sort or the other have not really grasped what the Greeks (and I suppose every generation in its turn) found such great difficulty in realising, namely the principle of the Many in One. As Many, there are external relations; as One, they are internal. There are, however, I think it fair to assume, degrees or grades of internality or externality. The leaves and stem of a plant are more internally related to one another than are the plant and my hand that plucks it, though both my body and the plant are 'in the end' internally related as expressions of one Reality. There are wholes within the Whole. Conversely, my hand is more

external to the plant than the leaf is to the stem, though these are spatially external. The question of degree, it will be seen, is dependent on relevance to a whole.

Nevertheless, apart from these real grades, we do on different occasions tend to stress the one or the other. This depends upon the particular end we have in view. Internality and externality are both features of reality, but now the one, now the other, appears more prominent. In so far as things are regarded as intimate 'inner' expressions of a wider whole (or as belonging to that whole, so far as they reciprocally involve one another), so far do they appear internally related, and in so far as things are regarded as distinct wholes themselves, they appear externally related. These distinctions may be more or less arbitrary. We may say that purely subjective divisions are the more arbitrary, and those are less so which are based upon scientific knowledge.

Arbitrariness is illustrated by an ancient example of Stout's;[1] if a pillar is supporting a roof, neither is the roof a feature of the pillar, or *vice versa*, nor is the relation of the pillar to the roof an adjective of either, but falls outside the nature and existence of both, though within the whole of which both are parts. That is to say, if you consider the parts as entities the relations are external, if you consider the whole structure they are internal, even (I should add) as between the parts themselves.

It is vital to understand that the doctrine we have put forward does not involve the dissolution of terms in their relations. The terms are real and so are the relations; neither exist without the other, but both are distinct and real, even if we grant that the grades of

[1] *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, 1903, p. 23.

the terms' unities are dependent partly upon subjective activities. There is ground in reality, that is to say, for all the distinctions which we make, although we may for private interests ideally break up natural wholes, and out of the given materials arbitrarily construct others. As regards the reality of both terms and relations, Miss L. S. Stebbing hits the nail on the head, I think, when she says [1] simply that we have not terms and their relations, but terms in their relations. The universe is a whole of interrelated wholes, which, though real, derive their character from the larger Whole.

(*i*) The other problems to which we referred,[2] namely those of relativity, of ' meaning,' of ' truths ' or ' Truth,' of ' degrees ' of Truth and Reality, have already been solved by implication. The particular problem of relativity as it concerns the coherence view is that, if a judgment cannot be true without reference to all the others, and this is true of all judgments, truth will be a shifting meaningless vortex with no fixed standards anywhere. This sort of relativity is of course denied by Idealists, who maintain that ' somehow ' the appearances are conserved in the whole, but the ' how ' is confessedly a mystery. As it is only a mystery on the coherence view of things, which, in spite of its provisos, really does deny the reality of parts and appearances, and as it is not a mystery if we accept the Many with the One, it seems most rational to assume the metaphysics and epistemology of the coherence view mistaken. The assertion of ' parts,' of real orders in nature, in no wise contradicts the unity and reciprocal implications within reality, if we remember that these parts are in relation. So on the

[1] *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, 1916–17, p. 463. [2] P. 30.

side of knowledge it is no denial of knowledge's unity to say that there can be judgments which fully apprehend parts of reality and so are quite true. It is on this direct apprehension of parts that fuller knowledge is based. It is of course true, as the advocates of coherence point out, that a judgment is abstract and cannot therefore express all truth. But why not take your reality in abstract pieces if reality will stand it and it is the only thing to do? So long as you know that it is abstract and do not take it in mistake for the concrete whole, you will not, merely *because* you are abstractly judging, fall into error. You may begin to penetrate into the nature of your abstractions, you may go on for ever discovering more and more about what you took as simple terms. To complete your knowledge you would also have to use faculties other than abstract thought, such as feeling and sympathy, with powers in addition which finite beings may never possess. But the fact that knowledge is infinitely ramifying, that Truth is an infinite apprehension of all in All, does not one whit alter the abstract truth of your first judgment, which is true directly, in its own right, however we may test it. For as Reality has parts, real and artificial, so knowledge has judgments, true completely or provisionally. To answer another of our questions, there are truths as well as Truth.

(κ) The relation of truth to meaning requires a little more consideration. On the question of meaning itself a good deal has recently been said and written. Into the polemics of the question I cannot enter. I shall only state briefly my own position. Meaning, it seems to me, is always in some way related to a mind, and is never properly separable therefrom. There are two senses of the term ' meaning ' (of course

there are many more)[1] which must be carefully distinguished from one another. The first (1) is what I might call ' objective ' meaning. We speak of a *thing's* meaning, and ask, ' What is the meaning of this ? ' Science is mainly engaged in ' explaining ' particular phenomena by showing their significance in a wider system. The relation between the meaning of things and a mind is very difficult to justify without entering into discussion of the biggest problem in metaphysics. I can only say here that for natural phenomena to have meaning seems to me to involve that they are, as belonging to a structured systematic universe, the expression of mind. And I should say, if pressed, that the nature of what I have called ' objective ' meaning can only be made comprehensible in the end by introducing conceptions of value. Particular things have meaning, or significance, because they are part and parcel of a whole, of a Universe, which is a meaningful, a significant, whole, and a whole which is rational and purposive. The second sense (2) we might call, in contrast to the other, the ' subjective ' sense of the term ' meaning,' as *e.g.* when I say ' I mean this.' If we are to do so it must be remembered that meaning in this sense is not *merely* subjective or mental, any more than it is merely real, but involves a relation between a mind *and* reality. In ' I mean this,' ' this ' is neither a mere subjective entity nor a portion of the real world, but an interpretation by my mind of the real world. Meaning in this sense is a function of a mind directed towards reality. There is some one who means and there is something which he means

[1] I have not here specified whether I intend ' intensive ' meaning or ' extensive ' meaning. These I regard as inseparable aspects of meaning always present in each case.

which is some reality as confronted by his mind. I might further distinguish between (*a*) 'finite' subjective and (*b*) 'infinite' subjective meaning, the former epithet applying when some finite mind such as you or I mean something, the latter applying when the mind is infinite, perfect, all-knowing. In the former case the reality towards which a finite mind is directed is always some more or less limited portion of reality, 'what we mean' is always distinctly specifiable; and although it has always a wider background, that background in turn has its definite limits in knowledge. In the latter case (*b*) the meaning of anything is the meaning of all things. To an omniscient Mind the ideal expressed in the hackneyed but still beautiful—

> Flower in the crannied wall,
> I pluck you out of the crannies,
> I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
> Little flower—but if I could understand
> What you are, root and all, and all in all,
> I should know what God and man is,

would become actual. Even for Omniscience, however, 'objective meaning,' *i.e.* meaning as the *expression* of mind, would have to be distinguished from 'subjective' meaning, *i.e.* meaning as *known*. Joachim and the Idealists do not, as we saw, sufficiently distinguish between being and knowing.

When Joachim is speaking of the ideal of truth as Reality itself, it is 'objective' meaning or significant *being* which he is referring to. When he speaks of the truth of the schoolboy or the mathematician it is 'subjective' meaning to which he is referring. The schoolboy's judgment $3^2 = 9$ is less *true* (for Joachim) than the mathematician's, because his background of

meaning is narrower, owing to the severe limitations of his little knowledge. The mathematician's judgment, again, is for similar reasons less true than the Absolute knowledge. From what we have said it ought to be plain why we ought to reject this view. The abstract judgment, though not Complete Truth, is, abstractly, but if we do not mistake its meaning, completely true within itself. 'There are truths as well as Truth.' And here our doctrine of meaning comes in. Truth is not either 'objective' or 'subjective' meaning (though Reality *is* significant and for an Absolute Mind the apprehension of meaning would be completely True). To mean, explicitly, in the 'subjective' sense, is, for a finite mind, to mark out mentally certain areas of reality which are relevant to the subject and predicate of a judgment; the products of this action of mind upon existing reality are the meanings, or, more explicitly, the content of the meanings; and it is the assertion in a judgment of these contents to be related in a certain way which is true or false. To mean in any given case is mentally to limit the areas of reality with which a judgment deals,—there is a notion of activity contained in this aspect of the term 'meaning'; Dr. Schiller speaks of 'projecting meaning like an *a* particle.'[1] Subjective meaning is a kind of mental pointing; judgments deal with what is pointed out and it is they which are true or false. Meaning is not truth, but for (abstract) judgments to be definitely true or false their meaning must be clear and unambiguous. Of course 'appercipient' background affects the purely subjective meaning of whomsoever makes a proposition, but this does not enter into the propositions proper, and it has

[1] *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, 1919, Symposium, "The Meaning of Meaning."

nothing at all to do with the truth of the explicit proposition.

(λ) There are, then, no 'degrees' of truth, and it should follow from all we have said that there are no degrees of reality. There are no degrees of truth as regards explicit propositions because if these are explicit they have a direct, if abstract, truth of their own. If they are vague or confused or ambiguous or 'felt,' they must be clarified if their truth is clearly to *appear*, but the degree of systematic explicitness is not a degree of truth. On the converse side there are no degrees of error (though there may be more *errors*) in propositions where meaning is explicit. Explicit error is either error or not error. It cannot be partial truth, although of course it is not *in vacuo* and always has its grounds in reality. There are no degrees of reality, because although the whole of reality does not obviously manifest itself in each 'part,' and some 'parts' (*e.g.* a human being) reflect reality more apparently than others (*e.g.* a piece of stone), yet each has its own reality which it derives from parent Reality. It is misleading to call a man more real than a stone because he is more comprehensive.

(μ) We have in this chapter examined the implications of what may roughly be divided into two aspects of the coherence theory. One set of difficulties was raised by what may be called 'Metaphysical' Monism, the others were the outcome of 'Epistemological' Monism. The doctrine of Idealistic Metaphysical Monism, that there is only One Experience, ends in the denial of finite existence and truths. We shall not, in future chapters, return to such a theory again. Epistemological Monism, on the other hand, is an attempt (an example of which we have just seen) to

reduce truth and knowledge to terms of existence, to fuse knower and known till they are indistinguishable. Epistemological Monism may also be the gendering cause of theories which are, metaphysically speaking, poles apart from Metaphysical Idealism. These theories may be classed under the general heading of 'New Realism.'

CHAPTER III

AMERICAN NEW REALISM, TRUTH AND ERROR

§ 1. *Introduction.*

§ 2. *Brief general summary of some points in New Realism.*

§ 3. *General criticism of some points in New Realism.*—(*a*) Value of New Realism in insisting on 'objectivity' of cognitive consciousness. (*β*) But it errs in denying the subjective aspect. (*γ*) To point to examples of physical reproduction, as Holt does, does not disprove the mental. Even if no *images* exist, there may be a psychic. (*δ*) Mind as 'cross-section' of objects, or objects as logical. These are the alternatives which neo-realistic objectivism offers. (*ε*) If object = logical content, then New Realists are shutting their eyes to empirical facts, *e.g. pastness*. If, on the other hand, we accept empirical facts, as space and time, we must distinguish this *real* world from our thinking and the content of thought. (*ζ*) The 'hysteron proteron' of defining reality as logical. Logic is the formal science of judgments of reality, and depends for its 'laws' on reality's structure. Even non-contradiction, because based upon the static aspect of reality, has limited application. (*η*) If, then, thought be distinguished from reality, truth and error will belong to thought and not to reality. The fallacy of 'objectivism.' (*θ*) (*a*) Error is not only not always, but *never* ultimately contradiction. And (*b*) the term contradiction is further utterly inapplicable to the existing world. (*ι*) Conclusion.

§ 1. Introduction

We now come to another but very different monistic interpretation of truth. The New Realism which we are about to examine is exhibited in its most typical and systematic form in a volume entitled *The New Realism*,[1] published in America in 1912. There are

[1] *Co-operative Studies in Philosophy*, by Holt, Marvin, Montague, Perry, Pitkin, and Spaulding.

other writers, particularly in this country (*e.g.* Moore, Russell, Alexander), who may be properly classed as New Realists, but there appear to be, not only greater individual differences between the writers, but differences sometimes between the same individual's point of view at different periods, points of view which develop so considerably in the course of time that it is sometimes a little difficult to say where So-and-so does stand. Dr. G. E. Moore appears to be less certain now about things which he formerly believed; some of his later work[1] seems to me to be tending towards a Realism which is certainly not 'new.' Mr. Bertrand Russell, who says, "Travelling, whether in the mental or the physical world, is a joy, and it is good to know that, in the mental world at least, there are vast countries still very imperfectly explored,"[2] is notoriously an intellectual adventurer. We have not here classed him among the New Realists, whose tendency is monistic, but in a class by himself; for, although his earlier theory of belief as a relation between objects is 'New Realistic,' and his recent abandonment of an 'act' of knowledge is a sign of his tendency to agree with the Americans, his theory of truth and error is, so far as it is possible to interpret it consistently, unmistakably dualistic as regards its epistemology, being in both cases a 'correspondence' theory. Mr. Russell's aspirations are, no doubt, to be an unqualified Neo-Realist, Behaviourist, and all the rest of it. But although, like some others, he desires to explain both the physical and the mental world as different arrangements, as 'perspectives' and 'biographies' of a single neutral 'stuff,' and is because of this a monist in spirit, yet his present retention of

[1] See Chap. VII. § 2.

[2] *Analysis of Mind*, p. 16.

mental images, beliefs, and feelings, places him still on the side of those who interpret truth as a property of a mental function rather than as a quality of facts. Prof. Alexander's point of view, again, to which we shall have to make reference, is yet, although it is in most respects very radically 'new,' unorthodox from the American point of view in its insistence on a mental 'act' which is 'lived through' or 'enjoyed.'

In the immediately following section, therefore, I shall be concerned with certain parts of the doctrine of two of the Americans, Profs. Montague and Holt, who deal with what is our special problem, the problem of truth and error. My account and remarks thereon will have to be of the most general kind, as our interest is with the fundamental basis of the realistic theory of knowledge and truth, and not with details which are of interest only if we can accept the fundamental assumptions. Of such detail New Realism is replete.

§ 2. Brief General Summary of some Points in New Realism

The most fundamental assumption of New Realism seems to be that knowing is not a 'peculiar' or in any way mystical, insight into facts, but one fact in the world, just as good as, but no better than, other facts. Knowledge is not the function of something specifically 'mental,' if 'mental' means on a different plane and of a different nature from space or time or physical objects. Knowledge is something which *happens* to things, and the happening of knowledge to things does not, in the main, distort the nature of these things.

Thus New Realism is among other things a polemic

against all 'Idealism,' which it classifies as 'Subjectivism.' Neither ontologically nor epistemologically are there 'subjective' facts as opposed to 'objective' ones. Ontologically, the self, according to some New Realists, is simply a cross-section of the existing universe to which the organism is at the time and throughout its life responding. The organism is as a searchlight whose function is to reveal objects already there. Epistemologically, again, the subjective is not a set of private entities which are opposed to the real world and which get between the 'subject' and things. Rather there is no merely subjective. What are known always, directly, are existing things. The content of knowledge or consciousness which lies before mind is not subjective, it is the very things themselves: the content is numerically identical with the thing known, and is not in a class by itself. Thus it is objects which literally and actually enter into the mind, and not subjective entities.

We must be particularly careful, when dealing with New Realism, as to how we use the term 'real.' Thus we should be accused of misrepresenting the doctrine of New Realism if we were to say, instead of the above, that *real* objects enter into mind. New Realists carefully distinguish reality from unreality,[1] in fact they define truth and error in terms of these respectively.[2] Everything in the universe is not real, though everything exists. Thus we should be safe only in saying that it is always existing objects which enter into the mind.

This distinction between reality, unreality, and existence, leads us to a very important aspect of the theory. We have seen that the content is numerically

[1] *E.g. New Realism*, pp. 358-60. [2] *Ibid.* p. 252.

identical with the thing, which, however, need not, though it may be, a ' real ' thing. This is crucial. Common-sense dualism is inclined to think of the merely ' subjective ' and the ' objective ' as ' unreal ' and ' real ' respectively. But New Realism, for which the distinction between subjective and objective is meaningless, for which the content and the object are identical, must have a different criterion of real and unreal than that of subjective and objective. As there is only existence, reality and unreality must fall within that existence. The criterion of reality, as opposed to unreality, is, precisely as it has to be in Monistic Idealism, logical. It is the logical principle of non-contradiction. New Realism tends to give us a wholly logical account of the universe, in which, as non-contradiction comes to be the sole criterion of reality, the existence of things means little or nothing at all. Prof. Holt particularly is bored when people begin to talk about existence; it matters so little whether things exist or not because everything,—error, contradiction, as well as harmony and law,—exists as much as everything else. For Prof. Holt, ' reality,' in its traditional sense of meaning existence as opposed to the subjective, is the remnant of an outworn superstition. What matters is just how existence works itself out in logical harmony or discord. " As to what reality is, I take no great interest," says Prof. Holt.[1] Prof. Montague, again, identifies unreality with false propositions, and reality with true propositions, the test once more being logical.

All this has, very obviously, a direct bearing upon the problem of truth and error. New Realism cannot support the view which is usually held that truth and

[1] *New Realism*, p. 366.

error are properties of 'subjective' facts which are true or false according to their relation to an objective or 'existent' or 'real.' As there are no 'subjective' facts, truth and error must be reducible to properties of the objective. *Things* must be true or 'false.' Prof. Holt is particularly explicit on this point. As the criterion of truth and error for him is non-contradiction, and truth actually exists, we must show that contradiction is to be found in the existing world as well as harmony. "Now it must be admitted," says Holt,[1] "that errors are all of knowledge, or are in experience: but the important point is another: that all errors are cases of contradiction or contrariety . . . the experiencing is not the significant fact." Again, "The actual problem is the contradiction or contrariety itself: what is the significance of a universe that holds such things? And here, once more, the only solution which appeals in practice to any one is the ancient one: that only one of two incompatible propositions *is* in the universe, the other is 'only subjective.'" He goes on to maintain that this is a mistake, that error is not, as some think, a contradiction between a subjective and an objective, but that all error is objective, that it belongs to existence. To make this clearer, he points to what he regards as contradiction in the physical universe, *e.g.* instances of "collision, interference, acceleration and retardation, growth and decay, equilibrium, et cetera. . . . The law of one motion will state that the particle moves up (or shall move up) while that of the other motion states that it moves down (or shall move down) at the same moment. Each law opposes the other, and although the relation is called one of contrariety, this contrariety is in fact

[1] *New Realism*, p. 361.

more than contradiction; for if one law says *up*, the other not only says *not-up*, but further specifies *down*. Logic cannot show a negation more thorough." [1]

Prof. Montague, in maintaining that "*the true and false are respectively the real and the unreal, considered as objects of a possible belief or judgment*," [2] and that the real universe is "*the space-time system of existents, together with all that is presupposed by that system*," [3] is taking somewhat the same line of thought. This is seen more clearly when we understand that "every reality can be regarded as a true identity-complex or proposition, and as each proposition has one and only one contradictory, we must say that the remainder of the realm of subsistent objects must consist of the false propositions or unrealities, particular and universal, which contradict the true propositions comprising reality." [4] It is clear, and yet it does not seem clear. Prof. Montague's view of truth and error is further elaborated by an exposition of a very obscure and difficult view of his own, in which causality is identified with consciousness. He calls this doctrine hylopsychism, *i.e.* that "the potentiality of the physical is the actuality of the psychical and the potentiality of the psychical is the actuality of the physical"; or, in the form of a definition, "Consciousness is the potential or implicative presence of a thing at a space or time in which that thing is not actually present." [5] Into this very difficult doctrine I cannot enter: it appears to rest on analogies, to identify brain states with mind states, and although it offers a useful analysis of how error may arise through distortion of the object by the media, the primary identification of cerebral effects with

[1] *New Realism*, p. 364. [2] *Ibid.* p. 252. [3] *Ibid.* p. 255.
[4] *Ibid.* [5] *Ibid.* p. 281.

psychical ideas seems to me to render the whole account of truth and error meaningless, as I hope to show in a more general way immediately below. We must be wary of attempts to *reduce* the mental to terms of something else. I may quote an example. When the child clutches what he wrongly thinks is a bent stick in the water, " he does not *infer* from an internal sensation or image of a bent stick to a bent stick existing outside him. But rather, the image of the bent stick which is cast upon his retina (as it would be cast upon a photographic plate) produces a purely physical brain state which directly ' implies ' or has for its ' meaning ' or ' potentiality ' an external bent stick. The implicate of the brain state, however, happens in this case not to exist, and therein consists the error." [1]

§ 3. General Criticism of some Points in New Realism

(*a*) To begin with, we must realise the essential truth which lies at the root of New Realism's criticism of Subjectivism. On the ontological side, it is alleged to be difficult to find a place to-day for a ' self ' thought of as in any way ' substantial.' The same holds good to some extent of the self thought of as a psychical ' stuff ' of immediate experience, although the denial of this is perhaps less certainly true. Mr. Russell, who wants very much to be a Behaviourist, is debarred from becoming so completely by the conviction that feelings, beliefs, desires, images, are in some way indubitably ' mental ' or ' psychical,' and testimony from such a quarter carries great weight. Still, so far

[1] *New Realism*, p. 292.

as knowledge is concerned, and the emphasis on knowledge has recently been very great, it is no doubt, *up to a point* (*but only up to a point*), sound policy to regard consciousness and the knowing self (which because of the emphasis on knowledge are usually, rightly or wrongly, identified) not as a psychical experienced, not even as a function which knows (the Americans, with whom I am dealing, disagree on this point with Alexander, who asserts an ' act ') but as the cross-section of that which it knows, the revelation of which cross-section is in part at least the function of the organism. Once again it is no doubt sound policy *up to a point* to insist that the content of knowledge is, as such, not ' subjective ' nor ' psychic,' but that it is in very fact the literal existing thing which is presented, which is known. This ' objectiveness ' of mind, this manner in which mind seems to realise itself by projecting itself, as it were, into the four dimensions of objects, is a startling fact when considered, and it is a fact which New Realism, with its emphasis on external perception, has been strong to insist upon. I quote from Bosanquet, who quotes it from Hoernlé, who quotes it from Hocking's *The Meaning of God in Human Experience*, a short extract illustrating the fact in a striking way : " . . . it has fallen upon me with a shock—as when one thinking himself alone has felt a presence—that I *am* in thy soul. These things around me are in thy experience. They are thy own ; when I touch them and move them I change *thee*. When I look on them, I see what thou seest, and I experience thy very experience. For *where art thou* ? Not there, behind those eyes, within that head, in darkness, fraternising with chemical processes. Of these, in my own case, I know nothing and will know

nothing; for my existence is spent not behind my wall, but in front of it. . . . And there art thou also. This world in which I live is the world of thy soul; and being within that, I am within thee."

(β) But this striking passage, which so beautifully expresses the positive truth for which New Realism (with less delicious tongue) in its polemic against Subjectivism contends, also contains in it that other half of the truth that New Realists will not admit. It is that '*I* am in *thee*' and '*thou* in *me*.' Although *I* am not within my brain, fraternising with chemical processes (New Realists, take note), yet you and I, sharing in a common world, have that community just because we are *two*, able each to have unique experience of common things. It is this refusal to admit the other side of the question which constitutes the simple but crucial error of New Realism, and which renders its criticism of 'Subjectivism' abortive.

For to insist that there are 'subjective' factors in knowledge is not to fall into the error of Subjectivism, namely, to believe that we cannot transcend our own states. New Realism's contention that we do not know our own states, but things, is, I think, true of perception, but that is not to say that knowledge is *identical* with its objects. If we do say so we are simply ignoring what is the essence of knowledge, namely, that it is presence of objects to a subject, to something which, however we explain its origin and nature, is very conveniently called mind. Knowledge is an experience, involving psychical complexities like any other experience; it is an experience which you and I know we have because we feel it. The fact that it is also in its nature self-transcending, that it does not terminate in my own felt states of mind but that some

of those states, *e.g.* attention, which on the subjective side are felt, are on the objective side instruments for focussing objects of knowledge, is not inconsistent with the mental side of the process. The fact that this is a table (in virtue of its fulfilling certain functions, etc.) is as fundamentally and irreducibly different from that fact that I *know* it to be so, as the fact that *I* know it to be so is numerically distinct from the fact that *you* so know it. Knowledge may be *of* physical objects in causal relation, but that is a very different thing from maintaining that it is physical or that it is in any sense whatsoever a causal relation itself. Again, if we say knowledge is a relation of things to the organism which is a thing among things, we are so far justified, in so far as the organism, a thing among things, is regarded as a selective instrument, reacting upon the physical world, its environment, of which physical world it is itself a part. Knowledge of the physical world certainly involves this. But it is not, on the other hand, reducible thereto. Knowledge presupposes reactions; it presupposes what are the concomitants of these reactions, namely, sensations, but knowledge is not itself either a mere reaction nor a mere group of sensations. It is more than that. It involves consciousness of, discrimination and comparison between, its objects. In its very nature it must involve far more than the mere physical organism is adequate to explain, a standing off from and a criticism of the things from which it distinguishes itself by the very process of that criticism. The inadequacy of the mere physical organism is seen particularly when we think of objects contemplated in remote space or time. No doubt the organism is instrumental in all cognitive acts whatsoever, but for the instrumentality to have any meaning, it must be

the instrument of something else, which we rightly call ' psychical ' or ' mental.'

(γ) Prof. Holt makes a great deal of showing that ' reproduction ' is not specifically a mental characteristic, by pointing out all kinds of reproductions in the physical world which are not mental, such as images in the mirror,[1] the shoe-last making machine[2] which carves out duplicates, and the like. This would not of course disprove that there are ' mental ' reproductions unless any one thought, as Prof. Holt seems to think they do, that reproduction necessarily involves mentality. What is important is just the very point which Prof. Holt, with his analogies, ignores, namely, the special character of the ' reproduction ' which some call mental. It is not *qua* duplication that ' images ' appear ' mental,' but by reason of the fact that they appear specifically to be *mine*, to be a part of my private experience which in virtue of its peculiar nature I am wont to call ' psychic,' even although I am ready to grant that they are images *of* something physical. But in addition to all this, even if Prof. Holt could prove (as is, I think, not impossible[3]) that there is no reproduction in ' images,' he would not therefore be establishing a view which would preclude the possibility of psychic ' subjective ' factors. Knowing might be direct and not by means of reproduction, and yet be, so far, a psychical, ' subjective ' process.

(δ) The denial of a subjective element in contradistinction to a ' real ' or ' objective ' leads to the logical Monism described, in which every content of cognition has an equal place and is equally objective, error as much as truth. Or it is equally true and

[1] *New Realism*, p. 306. [2] *Ibid.* p. 304.
[3] See below, Chap. V. § 6.

another way of stating the same thing to say that the so-called ' subjective ' facts are just ways in which the one existence arranges itself. The content of cognition is literal existence, so that when we think of the past or future, or think erroneously, the identical existing object is present to our ' minds.' It is possible to think of New Realism in two ways. One is from the side of existing objects, when mind is explained in terms of existence as a cross-section of existing objects. In this case mind is thought of as a projection outwards in space and time, sometimes very far outwards into past or future or remote in place. The other way of thinking of New Realism is to think of it from the side of thought. In this case it is not mind which is explained in terms of existence, but existence which is explained in terms of logic and logical judgment. From this point of view mind is not so much conceived as ' projected outwards,' as the world we think of as expressing itself in space and time and motion and life is projected upon the timeless plane of logical thought. Looking at the matter in the way first mentioned, the content becomes the existing object where and whenever it exists, so that mind is not here, where I am, but where its thoughts, *i.e.* its objects, are. Looking at the matter from the other side, the objects lose their spatio-temporal character in becoming contents ; they become mere logical entities.

(ε) New Realists may object to such metaphors of ' inward ' and ' outward,' denying as they do the distinction between subjective and objective. But there is a real difficulty involved, which I think it is impossible to avoid unless one accepts some such distinction as that between subjective and objective. The alternatives are, either, if the object is the imme-

diate content of knowledge, you must give up the existing world of space and time, change, quality, life, substituting for it logical entities, in which case you can no longer pretend to be 'scientific' or even empirically minded; or, if you accept the empirical spatio-temporal world, you must distinguish between that existing world and the immediate 'content' of knowledge—*i.e.* you must accept a distinction between 'subjective' and 'objective.'

The first alternative is intolerable, and it indeed defeats its own ends, namely, to explain knowledge and to explain the world. For, suppose I am thinking of a past object (accepting for the moment 'past' empirically), and say that, in order that knowledge may be direct, the past object, which is my content, must be here, now, while I am thinking. If I so suppose, then I cannot explain the world. I am first of all contradicting myself by asserting that it is a *past* object of which I am thinking. If it is literally in the *past* then it cannot possibly literally be my *present* content. So that I am giving a false account of the object which is past. In the second place, it does not describe knowledge, but evades the question by identifying the object with the content. Because I think now of a red rose last summer, and because the red rose then perceived had substantially the same characteristics as the rose now thought of, it does not follow that the identical existing rose last summer *is* my present content. To say so is not merely to leave the problem of knowledge unexplained, it is to caricature the very notion of knowledge. Such a 'logical' view of knowledge which reduces 'things' to mere characters is not at all far from the extremist subjectivism, 'logical' subjectivism albeit.

We cannot avoid therefore accepting some form of the other alternative, namely, that the world is not merely logical, that there is a distinction between content and existing thing. Timeless logical entities, as we shall find reason to believe true, are not the ultimate stuff of existence, though existence certainly organises itself in ways which can often only be described in logical terms. The existing red of the rose that died last summer is not identical with my present content as I think of it. My present content, as we shall see later, is also not a reproduction of the rose's qualities. It is just the resultant of my thinking of the existing red rose last summer, nothing more nor less. We saw before that knowledge of relations, which is my knowledge or yours, must be distinguished from the relations known. So now again we must, if we are to look fairly and squarely at knowledge in a quite empirical way, admit that there is a clear distinction between (*a*) my thinking, (*b*) my content, and (*c*) the real existing world.

It follows that we cannot afford to sneer, like Prof. Holt, at reality and existence. We may admit that for knowledge it is the objective and not the subjective which is important, that the ideal of knowledge is to transcend the accidentals of the subjective and to realise the essence of objects, that logical characters transcend the subjective ; but we must also realise that logical characters are not identical with what we, in our ordinary full-blooded, non-theoretic moments (and also, I imagine, Prof. Holt at these moments) call reality. Reality may be a system of harmony, order, law, but it is existence, not subsistence ; it is not with any meaning called a scheme of concepts or logical propositions.

(ζ) Indeed to call reality logical and to refuse to be

interested in existence is to put the cart before the horse. Rather are we given reality, solid reality with stuff as well as form, the ever-changing reality in space and time, of ships, stars, trees, matter, beasts, and man. In contact with that reality man through time discovers certain uniformities and laws which are the laws of natural, mental, and even (as I think) moral science. A study of the more formal side of the concrete propositions used in describing truly these laws reveals certain uniformities of form which are the 'laws' of logic. These provide us with the clue to the pattern which our thought must follow if it is to be true. We have long ago learned that logical laws are not subjective rules merely; they are the ways in which we must think if we are to think truly, just because thinking is concerned with reality and must follow reality's structure rather than determine it. The very vaunted law of non-contradiction itself, though it is a 'law of thought,' is a law not of thought merely (were *mere* thought possible) but of thought of reality. It holds in so far as it is based in reality, so far as reality confirms it, and no further. Analysis reveals that its application is not half so wide as many logicians imagine. It holds where propositions are concerned with the static, where the subject of the proposition is clearly defined and remains itself uncomplicated by troubles of time and change. It breaks down completely, because it fails properly to apply, in cases of change, where contradictory predicates seem to be less a violation of nature than very nature herself is a violation of logical laws, where the paradoxes of Heracleitus are, though obscure, more suggestive of the real nature of things than the daylight clear propositions of logic books. To put logic and its formal criterion of con-

tradiction before the reality with which we all, even New Realists, have living and vital contact, to substitute non-contradictory propositions for reality, is not only to put the cart before the horse but to tie the horse's legs; for non-contradiction will certainly never carry you anywhere in time.

(η) If then the very nature of knowledge is grounded on the difference between existence and thought, and if thought derives its 'laws' (*e.g.* non-contradiction) from the nature of existence, it will follow that truth and falsehood, properties of knowledge, must find their meaning in some relation of thought to existence. We have said that knowledge without a subjective element is unthinkable. If that is so, truth and error will be qualities of something which is anyhow in part subjective, and it will be impossible to find either truth or error in the objective. To say that it is so is to commit the error of objectivism, which in its own way is just as bad as its opposite, subjectivism. Prof. Montague's definition of truth and falsehood in terms of reality and unreality will fall to the ground, as will Prof. Holt's endeavour to find error in the existing world. It is obvious that according to New Realism you must either discover it in the one world or you must deny its existence. In the end the two ways lead to very much the same goal, because you cannot properly think of error as applying to things, and if you try to discover it there you must end up by admitting that error is just as good, and in the end, as 'real' a set of facts as truth. But if error is as 'real' as truth, then it is not, by hypothesis, error at all.

Prof. Montague thinks that it is a great mistake to suppose that truth and falsity belong to beliefs. He

calls the view that they do so the "Verbal Fallacy of Psychophysical Metonymy." "*True and false*," he says, "*only apply to beliefs in a metonymous or borrowed sense, i.e.* in virtue of the relation of the act of believing to the object believed in. There would be no sense in calling an act of belief as such either true or false. It is always because of what is believed that the belief is true or false. Belief borrows its truth or falsity from its object or content. When we speak of belief as true we mean that the thing believed is a fact, is real, is so, is true,"[1] just as when we say 'what a fine sight!' we mean the thing seen and not the process of seeing. I should be the last to deny that truth or falsity depends for its existence upon objects. I would, however, reverse Montague's statement. It is upon the contraries of the propositions here quoted that I shall base later on my whole view of truth. I might indeed take them as my text. Here let me say only that, whilst truth and error involve a relation of mind *to objects*, the relation of knowing, and that whilst it is in this sense true to say that it is because of what is believed that the belief is true or false, it does not follow from this that truth is *borrowed* from the object or content. Knowledge, rather, is just the relation of *mind* to the *object*, and truth and error qualities or properties of the cognitive relation.[2] But if we have, as we have not, to choose whether truth and error are *simply* subjective and mental, *or* objective, then it is preferable to choose the alternative which Prof. Montague thinks is nonsense, namely, that an act of belief as such can be either true or false. Facts and objects are there always; truth and error come into being through the agency of your mind and mine.

[1] *New Realism*, p. 256.

[2] See below, Chap. VIII. *passim*.

Truth and falsity are properties of mental acts, of beliefs rather than objects, because, although beliefs could not, without objects, be true or false, yet with them they are so. Facts, on the other hand, believed or not, are never true or false.

(*θ*) The same general arguments would hold good as against Prof. Holt's view that error is contradiction and that it is to be found in the external world. We might, it is conceivable, find contradiction there, but we could not find error. Let us take the two questions separately. (*a*) Is error always contradiction? and, (*b*) Is contradiction to be found in the external world? As to the first, (*a*) I am doubtful as to whether error can ever be described as due ultimately to contradiction. Suppose I say 'this concrete is not hard,' when it is hard, then the propositions 'it is hard,' 'it is not hard' are undoubtedly contradictory and the second one erroneous. The proposition is erroneous, because it is the nature of things that a piece of concrete at one time and at one place and in one sense shall either be hard or not hard ('hard' being carefully defined). The single proposition is not contradictory; it is only not a statement of the fact. If you state the fact correctly and place it alongside of the other proposition, thus, 'this concrete is hard,' 'this concrete is not hard,' then you have contradictoriness quite clearly, and we are helped to an understanding of the error. But the error is dependent, not on contradiction but on the nature of a fact distinct from propositions about it. To make contradictory propositions is not allowable, because truth is the norm of thought, and truth is dependent on reality: you must not *say* contradictory things about the same subject because it cannot sustain incompatible adjectives. So error is

dependent not upon contradiction ultimately, but upon reality.

(*b*) The answer to the second question, 'Is contradiction to be found in the objective world?' has already just been answered implicitly and in part. You must not *say* contradictory things because there cannot be incompatibility of characters. But our answer only applied to a particular thing, a piece of concrete, and we have to meet again the general question, namely, 'Is contradiction to be found at all in the world?'

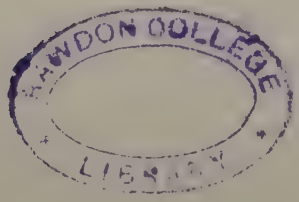
Sometimes, as in the case of change, incompatibility of qualities *is* found. Can reality then, because of this, be said to be contradictory? The answer is, no. 'Contradictory' applies only to statements *about* reality. Contradiction arises through conflicting statements about objects in which there is no conflict in the sense that an object's properties are clearly defined, are what they are, identical with themselves. But, in the second place, when mind is dealing with objects which are *not* clearly defined, where there is continuous change, for example, then the term 'contradictory' does not properly apply, even to *statements*, because in this sphere we have passed into a realm which logical statements, guided by non-contradiction, cannot adequately express. You can, for pleasure's sake, make paradoxes like Heracleitus, "It is, and it is not." They are interesting in demonstrating the limits of logical statement, for no one can ever refute them, but they are neither logically true nor untrue, though they may have aesthetic truth.[1] They are only suggestive. Change cannot properly be expressed logically in

[1] See Chap. IX. § 2, (*δ*) and (*ε*).

words. The principle of non-contradiction simply has no bearing in these spheres.

In answer to Prof. Holt, then, there is never in the external world in the region either of the static or of the dynamic to be found 'contradiction,' because the term does not apply properly to external reality. In the former case things are as they are, in the latter they are becoming, and there are no adequate logical symbols of speech to express this paradox which is not a paradox, but everyday reality. Prof. Holt's own examples, as to the laws of nature contradicting one another, miss the mark, because the 'opposition of laws' is an opposition of propositions about things. Though things clash with, oppose one another and come to equilibrium, that is not contradiction but (as Prof. Holt says, though he does not appear to see its significance) contrariety. The statements of laws set side by side may appear paradoxical and contradictory, but it does not follow that reality is so. Once more, to reality the term contradictory does not apply.

(*i*) Truth, Error, contradiction, then, are properties of mental beliefs in their relation to an independent reality, and cannot be described as properties of objects.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CHAPTER IV

PROF. ALEXANDER'S THEORY OF TRUTH AND ERROR

§ 1. *Statement.*

§ 2. *Criticism of Prof. Alexander's Theory.*—(α) Advantage (as opposed to Americans) of 'act' is that it represents psychical factor. Difficulties are that it is abstract, that 'compresence' involves two factors, that the 'mind' becomes difficult to explain, that act is merely correlative to, and dependent upon, object. Somehow, there must be some agent, even if it be only the organism. (β) Alexander fails to make good use of his concept of 'act' or 'perspectives,' falling into new-realistic error of identifying knowledge with fact. Once again we must distinguish them. (γ) Examples of inconsistencies. (δ) Criticism that we do not know past objects literally, misplaced. Real difficulty already referred to. (ε) Because Alexander does not do justice to the subjective side of truth, he is obliged to introduce the social criterion. But both truth and error are primarily private affairs, involving *my* relation to reality. (ζ) Coherence of truth is dependent upon concrete coherence of reality, which coherence surely Alexander must admit. (η) To say that truth is both 'eternal' and 'progressive' is true only if 'truth' is used ambiguously. Abstract truth is 'eternally' true but is not All Truth, and must be supplemented if we are to 'progress.' (θ) Conclusion, and plan.

§ 1. Statement

The most outstanding difference in respect of knowledge between the theories of the American New Realists and Prof. Alexander is, as we have before indicated, the latter's insistence upon the existence of a mental *act*. Whilst for Holt and Montague knowledge is reduced to terms of the objects of knowledge, for Alexander knowledge involves mind and

reality. He reintroduces the psychic factor which the Americans seek to eliminate.

Yet he is still a thorough realist. He shares in the common realistic belief that the objects of knowledge are non-mental, existing apart from the mind, dependent upon it only as regards their being known by it. "Not its *esse* is its *percipi*, but merely its *percipi* is its *percipi*." The non-mental object, distinguished from the mind which knows it, stands in what Alexander calls a relation of 'compresence' with it, a relation which is not unique but is to be found existing between all orders of existence, its character varying with the objects related. Given the compresence of a plant and a stick, the plant, if it is of a certain variety, twines round the stick; substitute mind and the mind *knows* the stick.

Prof. Alexander expands this theory of knowledge by reference to his well-known conceptions of 'contemplation' and 'enjoyment.' The mental factor in the knowledge relation is not an object or entity or existent to be known or *contemplated*; the mental factor is in any given case simply the act of knowing which can only, in Alexander's terminology, be *enjoyed* and not contemplated. The mind as a whole is simply a continuum of these 'enjoyed' mental acts. To 'enjoy' is to have a direct, intuitive, inner experience of an act, which is wholly distinguished from the 'external' attitude of contemplation.[1] If the mental act could be 'contemplated' it would thereby become the object of knowledge and would be no longer a mental 'act.' Thus there are no subjective mental entities. If so-called introspection claims to know such, then it is either confusing contemplation

[1] For fuller amplification, see *Space, Time, and Deity*, vol. i. pp. 12-13.

with enjoyment or it is taking 'extrospection' for introspection. In the former case, what we call 'introspection' is but the refined and analytical working out of our own enjoyed experiences ;[1] in the latter case, when we are searching *within* the mind for, *e.g.*, the objects of past experience, we are really directing mental activity outwards upon the world. Once again, as with the Americans, there are no ideas to come between us and the real ; our knowledge of the past is the mind's direct compresence with the bodily objects themselves. Unlike the Americans, Alexander insists that it is a *mind*, which, rather than the mere organism favoured by Prof. Holt, is the searchlight illuming the objects of knowledge. It is *I* who know. I enjoy my knowing, and it is a confusion, thinks Alexander, to identify the illumined cross-section of the world with the mind itself.

It has been necessary thus very briefly to outline Alexander's view of knowledge, for it is intimately bound up with his theory of truth and error. Illusion arises in perception through the mind's interfering with objects and distorting them. Error in the same sphere is the assertion or judgment that the distorted 'perspective' holds good of the relevant bit of reality. To be in error is to 'squint' at reality and to take your squinting view for the undistorted real. Alexander, taking the case of a yellow rose erroneously called white, expresses it as follows:—"Owing to some defect in the erroneous observer, whether of sense or of carelessness or of haste, instead of seeing the colour which is before him in the reality, the yellow rose, he as it were squints at reality as a whole, and his mind is compresent with white instead of

[1] *Space, Time, and Deity*, vol. i. p. 18.

yellow. One eye sees this rose in its shape; the other sees not the yellow within the shape but a white. Thus two new realities have come into being ; one is the union of the real yellow rose with the mind of a true observer ; the other is the union of reality, though not merely this particular reality of the yellow rose, with the mind of the observer who squints or has a twist in his mind."[1] Or again, more explicitly: "An error is concerned with a piece of reality which is outside and does not belong to the given reality, though, as we saw in the case of the colour of the rose, the reality it deals with (the white colour) belongs to a class of realities (colours) which has its representative (yellow colour) within the given reality."[2]

It might be thought that, as error is the assertion of a distorted perspective, an asserted wrong combination of the elements of reality, that truth would be just the assertion of an undistorted perspective. This, however, is not so. *What* is judged in a true proposition is, for Prof. Alexander, a fact ; a true proposition (*i.e.* that which is judged) is literally real. If there were in the world only true propositions there would only be reality, and truth would not appear. "Were all minds perfect instruments of apprehension, mirrors of reality without inequalities in the surface (in Bacon's phrase), there would be no truth, for there would be no error. It is because minds differ and vary from normality, that reality compels minds to distinguish among one another and thereby to create truth, in their objects and in themselves."[3]

We are thus introduced to a somewhat strange doctrine of truth and error. It is through the incoherence of isolated false propositions with the

[1] *Space, Time, and Deity*, vol. ii. p. 255. [2] *Ibid.* p. 256. [3] *Ibid.* p. 259.

coherent body of true propositions, that the truth, as opposed to the reality, of these true propositions, is revealed and indeed made. Reality itself cannot properly be said to reject error. It is the clash between the body of true propositions and false propositions rather than between false propositions and reality, which fully exhibits error as such, and so truth; although of course truth and error are dependent upon the internal structure of the reality which includes or excludes them. "True propositions belong to the [relevant] reality; false ones introduce elements from elsewhere. True propositions are thus also real; but their truth is different from their reality. True propositions cohere, or rather false propositions are incoherent with true propositions and are rejected by us." [1]

The coherence of truth revealed in contrast with error is not discoverable, according to Alexander, by a single mind. We are social beings, and the distinction between the true and the false "only comes into existence through the conflict and co-operation of many minds. . . . Thus while on its objective or contemplated side error is detected by being convicted of introducing an element of reality which does not belong to the reality investigated, on its subjective or believing side it fails to cohere with the social believing. . . . In one way or another truth means the settling down of individual believings into a social whole and the condemnation of heretical or unscientific believing." [2] An entire solitary might find certain courses did not work, but he would not be in error. But as a matter of fact none of us are solitaries: we carry with us the social heritage of truth

[1] *Space, Time, and Deity*, vol ii. pp. 252-53. [2] *Ibid.* p. 258.

which we cannot reject if we would. True knowledge, then, although dependent for its reality upon fact, derives its truth, as such, through the intercourse of minds. It is this intercourse which, guided by reality, creates truth. It follows from this that truth is relative to social opinion, that it varies and grows obsolete, although in another sense 'once true always true.'[1]

One more point can be more shortly expressed in Alexander's own words: "There is no property of coherence in reality itself. Coherence is a property of the perspectives which we have ourselves selected; it is we who take them piecemeal and we who reunite them, and their reunion is performed through their exclusion of the incoherent error."[2]

§ 2. Criticism of Prof. Alexander's Theory

(*a*) There are certain difficulties concerning Prof. Alexander's theory of the 'act,' which has been subject to a good deal of contemporary criticism. Its advantages are that it effectively gets rid of any awkward notion of psychical 'stuff,' which must always appear out of place nowadays. It follows conveniently from this that secondary qualities—a dangerous reef in the troubled seas of realism—must be taken as real, and must in no way be thought of as mental. Again, the postulation of a psychical 'act' as well as a non-mental reality makes it possible to offer an explanation of the difficult problem of error, over which the Americans fail so completely. We are compelled to think that error has at least *something* subjective about it. Alexander offers us just enough

[1] *Space, Time, and Deity*, vol. ii. p. 263. [2] *Ibid.* p. 253.

of that subjective, and no more. The distinction between 'enjoyment' and 'contemplation' avoids that bugbear of all realists, subjective entities (for the subjective is not a contemplated entity but an enjoyed 'act'), whilst it is on the other hand possible for him to conceive how reality may be distorted by a mental act. The difficulties in the way of accepting the 'act' are somewhat obvious, though it is hard to prove all of them valid. The most apparently obvious objection is that it is difficult to think of an act apart from an agent, and that whilst to call the mind the continuum of acts is certainly 'empirical' enough, it is doubtful if that is in the end satisfactory. The modern mind abhors anything like a transcendent ego, and yet Hume's old difficulty remains, in new form. The self, it appears, must somehow be more than its successive 'enjoyments.' Taking the problem epistemologically (for metaphysics is not our province here), the term 'compresence' implies two factors which are compresent. The one factor is the object; can the other be the continuum, even the 'substantial' continuum of conscious processes or 'acts'? That is to say, is the contemplated object compresent with my biography which is my mind? This is difficult to conceive. If on the other hand we instance a single 'act,' it follows that, since the mental 'act' is correlative to the object and without it cannot be, there are not really two originally separate factors (subjective and objective) as in the case of the flower and the stick, and that 'compresence' does not truly describe the knowledge situation. It is of course *possible* to say that the object is compresent with the 'act,' but as the 'act' and the object are only distinguishable aspects of the concrete knowledge situa-

tion, the terms again scarcely seem to apply. If Prof. Alexander is determined to retain the conception of 'compresence' and at the same time to exclude anything psychic which can be 'contemplated' (the psychic cannot be contemplated, as we saw, except perhaps by a superior type of being which Prof. Alexander calls an 'angel'), his next best course would be, it seems, to say, in the American style, that the object is compresent with the organism, with which, at least, as it is a separate entity, the object *can* be 'compresent.'

(*β*) Apart from these difficulties, which are considerable, the conception of a mental act is a useful, and as we shall discover later,[1] in some sense or other an indispensable concept. (The belief in a mental act need not imply all that Prof. Alexander thinks about it.) Prof. Alexander, however, fails, as it seems to me, to make the best use of his concept in explaining truth and error, and in fact neutralises its value by his identification (at times) of truth with reality. The notion of 'perspectives' (which Alexander acknowledges as coming from Russell) is a sound one (if the significance of the term is fully realised, as it is not, I think, either by Russell or Alexander), and might with profit be related to the distinction, which Alexander makes so very clearly, between a mere cross-section of reality and my knowing of it, which is my 'act.' Yet with such a distinction, which is vital for a true theory of knowledge, he is not consistent. After noting carefully the double application of the word 'judgment' to the act and to the object, he proceeds to identify the object, or what is believed or judged about, with a *fact*. A perspective, again, he says, is

[1] Chap. VIII. § 2.

objective, is non-mental, is a fact. We have such contrary statements as this, " Hence since knowledge and science are generally understood with the implied emphasis on their truth, they are not reality itself but that reality as possessed by minds," and, " But the propositions themselves which possess the character of truth are real facts contained within the reality investigated, and when their truth is disregarded they are not different from reality . . . a science such as physics is nothing but the actual world as more fully revealed. . . . Propositions, like other cognita, are perspectives of the world, and when they are true are really in it, and in the places where they pretend to be." [1]

But how, if they are perspectives, even true perspectives, can this be so ? Surely a ' perspective,' just because the very term implies a viewer as well as a viewed, is not an external fact, but a fact *as seen by some one*, which is a totally different thing ? I may know real independent *facts*, but there is a basic difference between the independent facts in their existence, and these facts as known by me, even although we suppose, *per impossibile*, that I am a complete and perfect knower. I am not arguing that there is any idea which comes *between* me and the fact, but I am arguing that the content of knowledge is essentially different from the independently existing fact, and it implies no derogation of knowledge to say that it can only know objects as they are known, and cannot *be* those objects. To ignore this distinction is to fall into Holt's error and to land in the position that there is *only* the cross-section of the objects, making knowledge impossible of explanation. Again, we do not

[1] *Space, Time, and Deity*, vol. ii. pp. 253-54.

judge a fact, as Alexander tells us, we judge *about* a fact. The very assertion of a perspective makes it radically different from a fact, which simply *is*. I am of course aware that Russell and Alexander would not accept such a distinction. For them, I suppose, a perspective need not imply a viewer. My point is that it ought to, and must.

(γ) Alexander's failure to make clearly and consistently this fundamental distinction shows itself in phrases such as, " what is judged is a fact *or claims to be one*," [1] or, what we quoted before, " Thus two new realities have come into being ; one is the union of the real yellow rose with the mind of the true observer ; the other is the union of reality, though not merely this particular reality of the yellow rose, with the mind of the observer who squints or has a twist in his mind. *That reality* is the erroneous belief; it is the artificial product of the mind and *reality* as a whole." [2] This double view of ' reality ' is confusing. The right and proper meaning of reality is, according to Alexander, Space-Time as a whole and the complexes and parts within it. The ' product of mind and reality ' is *not* reality in this sense. We might of course frame by agreement our definition of reality so as to include these products, as well as material facts. This course, however, is not in consistency open to Alexander, for whom the only real is the objective world of Space-Time. Accordingly, if *reality* means solely Space-Time and its complexes, as he has said, then the ' product ' is something other than reality, is not real. If it were real, it would simply be as it is, and would be neither true nor false but simply fact. As it cannot

[1] *Space, Time, and Deity*, vol. ii. p. 250. The italics are mine.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 255. The italics are mine.

be real, may it not be, contrary to Alexander's real view, if not always contrary to his words, in *some* sense 'subjective'? Once again, truth and error are not facts but qualities of our apprehension of facts.

(δ) Alexander is frequently criticised [1] because he supposes that, whether they are past, future, hallucinatory, illusory, merely imaginary, or present here and now, it is the literal solid existing objects which we handle in thought. I agree that the term 'handle' may mislead, as may the terms 'perspective' and 'squinting,' which are scarcely adequate to describe all errors. They are, however, helpful metaphors. For it surely is the literal existing past of which I think when I remember, and it is reality viewed in a distorted way which I see when under illusion. The affair is comparatively simple if we admit that they are my views of reality itself. The real difficulty, to my mind, occurs simply, as has been said, in Alexander's identification of the perspective or view with the reality. What is distorted is my view of reality, not reality, which is as it is. Again, what is present is not the past, but my viewing of it. It has to be accepted that mind, as a matter of empirical fact, *can* do those things, and that the actual existing objects themselves are untransformed thereby. It is somewhat extraordinary that a realist like Alexander should have to maintain that 'minding' does *really* distort real things.

(ε) If Prof. Alexander were consistent about the 'perspectiveness' of perspectives, if he maintained right through his system that it is *I* who know, just as truly as it is the real which I know, then there would be no need to introduce the somewhat peculiar doctrine of truth created by social intercourse, for

[1] See *e.g.* Gregory, "Realism and Imagination," *Mind*, July 1921.

truth would be a quality of my private knowledge. The social criterion becomes necessary in Alexander's system, it seems, to account for the 'subjective' side of truth; but if the subjective side of each cognitive process were done justice to by Alexander, there would be no need to postulate that it is the clash of minds which makes error to exist. My private distortion of reality asserted to belong to it is quite sufficient in itself to constitute error, although it is of course perfectly apparent that the conflict of minds may *reveal* that error. Again, although it is true that man as a matter of fact is a social being, with a social heritage, it is also true that he is an individual whose thoughts, though they be of a common world, are yet his own. The philosopher needs to be guided by all knowledge, but he is in direct private contact with reality, and it is primarily through that contact that he guides his thought to truth, though he may test it by coherence with the body of knowledge.

Alexander of course admits that we test by experiment and that truth is guided by reality. Yet it is not, apparently, sufficient that our ideas should be adequate to reality; that would be to admit, he would say, some form of the correspondence theory, which is not to be tolerated. The only adequate experiment for Alexander is in the end the comparison of the individual idea (which is a particular reality) with the system of collective ideas (which is a wider reality). Alexander may be right or wrong in his dislike of the correspondence theory, but he fails, in my opinion, because of his fear of subjective entities, to account both for truth and error, which must contain a subjective element, which must be a relation of a subject's thoughts or ideas to objects. Not the idea must be

denied ; rather must it be interpreted truly if we are to offer an adequate theory of knowledge and truth. It seems somewhat arbitrary to say, as Alexander does, that true knowledge owes its truth to the collective mind but its reality to the proposition (*i.e.* the fact) which is judged. Truth and reality are not thus to be separated. Truth and error are properties of the mind's apprehension of reality; experiment or comparison with the body of social knowledge may test that truth or error, but truth and error in their nature are wholly independent of such tests, the account of which is not a description of the essence of truth and error.

(ζ) The success of coherence as a test of truth is dependent on the coherent system of reality. It is difficult to understand what Prof. Alexander means by denying that reality is coherent. Such a denial would, if pursued, appear to lead to some kind of blank monism. The system and order of the world is objective, as Prof. Alexander must strongly urge. Is it then untrue to say that the system of order and law is a 'coherent' system? If the coherence is but created by the intercourse of minds, if it is but the property of the system of perspectives, then the whole of knowledge would be the merest subjective illusion, the play of our collective fancies upon a featureless cosmos incapable even of breeding the difference without which coherence is impossible. (Or, if perspectives are real, then the coherence of them must be the coherence of reality.) The case must be otherwise. Truth, my truth, falls into a system, is coherent, because it consists of my thoughts of reality, which is itself systematic and coherent and orderly. It just *is* (very respectfully to contradict Prof. Alexander once

more) because the collective mind reveals many facets of one coherent reality, that the reference to society at once makes truth apparent and confirms it.

(η) Because of this, the relativity of truth is true only in a very restricted sense. That is to say, self-evident as it may sound, that truth is relative only in so far as it is not absolute. Prof. Alexander says, "Thus truth is at once eternal and progressive. 'Once true always true,' so long as the range of facts is restricted as before. But truth varies and grows obsolete or even turns to falsehood. Hence a theory may be true for one generation and false for the next. Yet it remains true for the range of facts open to the minds of the earlier generation. This is possible because truth is different from reality and implies possession by a standard mind."[1] Again, "The truth, that old truth may be new error, does but help us better to see that truth like error is a product of mind and reality, that error is always partial truth, and truth in its turn may contain the seeds of error."[2] To speak of truth as eternal and progressive is, very roughly speaking, and in a popular sense, true, but to maintain it strictly is to run with the hare and to hunt with the hounds, for the term truth is used in a 'sliding' fashion. Judgments, within their own limits, and taking the terms of one's judgments in a strictly defined way, are, as we saw in dealing with the coherence view, either true or not true. They are true if they express the fact they set out to express, and untrue if they do not. Nothing that can happen can ever, at any future time, make what is true or false in this defined sense false or true respectively. If I say 'this ink is red,' or 'A is going down the street,' then

[1] *Space, Time, and Deity*, vol. ii. p. 263. [2] *Ibid.*

my statements are unqualifiedly true *or* false if the meaning of my terms 'ink,' 'red,' 'A,' 'going down the street,' are clearly defined. Nothing that happens can make them *more* or *less* true or false. If, on the other hand, we mean by truth the absolute truth about the universe as reflected in these particular objects (supposing this to be possible, as I think some would hold), then no statements, and, I should say, no conceivable number of statements, however coherent, can ever be wholly true. In this sense new knowledge is always modifying the imperfect 'truth' that has gone before. We may go on discovering and penetrating into the nature of our terms for ever, proving perhaps such naïve statements about ink and colour and the movement of a 'person' in a street to be utterly shallow. These observations are very obvious ones, but it is well that a confusion between different senses of 'truth' under cover of one term, which has led to much chaos in epistemology, should be resolved. The first, as when we say that a statement is quite true or false, is the most usual sense of the word. This kind of truth is implied wherever we make, as in science and philosophy, definite propositions. Truth in this sense is a claim to express a definitely limited fact. If in their naïve forms propositions contain ambiguities, these must be removed by further definition; propositions which seem to be partly true and partly false are only so because they are confusions of more than one proposition. Truth in the second and wider sense is the unattainable ideal of philosophy. It is the ideal because it is philosophy's aim to view things *in ordine ad universum*; it is unattainable because philosophy must, so far, be abstract, and, being a pursuit of finite men, cannot escape the

artificiality which is always apt to, and indeed must, accompany the defining, limiting process. This process of limitation and abstraction is greatly elaborated in the particular sciences, each with its own clearly defined sphere. As abstract, no definite truth or system of truth is in its nature able to express the whole of reality (which is the ideal of truth for the Idealists), and in *that* sense, and in that sense only, no truth or system of truth can be wholly or absolutely true. On the other hand, if we do not mistake the nature of propositions, which is to express *parts* of reality, a clearly defined proposition may in *that* sense, and that only, be either quite true or quite false. It is important for a true view of truth and error to make these distinctions (which, once made, are obvious) very clearly indeed.

Finally, and to repeat, truth 'grows' and alters with succeeding generations not because truth *is* the coherence of collective changing opinion; truth becomes more and more coherent as between different minds because these minds are set in a single universe of law and system, whose coherence, progressively discovered, more and more sets its stamp upon the body of thought which is its discovery.

(*θ*) Speaking generally, Prof. Alexander seems to the present writer to fall between two stools. There is on the one hand the desire to avoid the conclusion that error is a part of the real world, and there is on the other a genuine realistic fear of the 'subjective.' It is the time-honoured dilemma discovered in the *Theatetus*, 'how can error either be real or not real?' Correspondence is one sort of attempt to solve the problem, but Prof. Alexander will have none of it. He is no doubt perfectly right if he means that we

do not know ideas which correspond, but real things. But epistemology cannot remain in the unsatisfactory position to which Prof. Alexander leads us. Traditional ideas of the 'subjective' may be wrong. But we shall have to insist that it has *some* meaning. Before going on to do this we shall have to consider theories which make considerably more use than Prof. Alexander does of the fact that there are at least two terms (psychical and reals) in the cognitive process, and which assume this to an extent which 'Epistemological Monists,' either of the Idealist or of the American New Realist brand would repudiate with their latest breaths. The first of these theories is the already mentioned 'correspondence' theory. I select Mr. Russell's expositions of it as being one of the most outstanding and distinguished examples.

CHAPTER V

MR. RUSSELL'S THEORIES

§ 1. Foreword.

A

§ 2. *Mr. Russell's earlier theory. Statement.*

§ 3. *Criticism of Mr. Russell's earlier theory.*—(α) 'Statements' and 'beliefs' distinguished. (β) Difficulties for correspondence through lack of this distinction here. (γ) How belief does and does not 'knit' or 'cement.' (δ) Bearing of this on Russell's criticism of 'single objectives.' (ε) 'Objectives' not existing entities: if so, Russell's criticism of 'single objectives' fails, and is, further, inconsistent. For he regards 'objects' or 'elements' in a judgment as mental; if so, why not objectives? (ζ) 'Correspondence' with what is outside thought (*a*) leads to agnosticism, and (*b*) does not *describe* truth.

B

§ 4. *Mr. Russell's later theory. Statement.*

§ 5. *Criticism of Mr. Russell's later theory.* (α) Dualism clearer, but not wholly so. Difficulties involved through obscurity of this. (β) Russell dismisses difficulty that correspondence of mental and real involves 'gulf,' and maintains knowing is an external relation. (γ) Leaving this, the objective of belief is neither 'mental' nor 'real,' but real-as-thought-of. (δ) This escapes 'gulf' of dualism, also subjectivism. (ε) *E.g.* of absurdity of regarding contents as merely mental. Words and sensations are signs or symbols, (ζ) as Russell admits. (η) Transitiveness or 'transparency' of contents. (θ) Difficulties if objective regarded as fact, *e.g.* 'that to-day is Tuesday.' (ι) A fuller analysis of what objective really is. (κ) Negative facts not tenable, and their supposition further makes correspondence impossible. (λ) 'Copying by images of facts' does not describe truth.

§ 6. *Images.*—(α) The existence of images cannot be maintained. (β) Laird criticised on this.

§ 7. *General concluding remarks.*—(α) If images denied, correspondence fails, and further, leaves perception unaccounted for, or (β) if not, involves 'representative perception.' (γ) Russell avoids this by 'knowledge by acquaintance' theory.

§ 8. *Is correspondence a useless concept?*—It is, in a very strictly defined sense, useful as a criterion, but does not describe nature of truth.

§ 1

In the following chapter I shall attempt to make an analysis of Mr. Bertrand Russell's theories of truth in order to find out whether his correspondence theory is a satisfactory one. We have seen that monistic theories of truth break down because they do not sufficiently recognise that knowledge is a process in which there appear at least to be two factors which we may, for want of better terms, call mental and real.[1] If we do not recognise this it is difficult to give a satisfactory account of truth, whilst error seems to offer insoluble problems. The correspondence theory, on the other hand, takes its stand upon the existence of the two factors, mental and real. Can it explain truth and falsehood satisfactorily on this basis? And if not, what are we to do? To discover the answers to these questions is now our task.

I have headed this chapter "Mr. Russell's Theories." There are reasons for and against such a procedure. For Mr. Russell's later theory, first offered, I think, to the *Aristotelian Society* in 1919 in a paper entitled "On Propositions, what they are and how they mean," and later republished in shorter form in Chapter 13 of his *Analysis of Mind*, is not an essentially different theory from his earlier, which first appeared in a volume entitled *Philosophical Essays*, and was later restated in *The Problems of Philosophy*. It is the same theory in essentials, but is modified to fit in with Mr. Russell's present conviction that there is

[1] I am painfully aware of the drawbacks of this terminology. 'Subjective' and 'objective' might seem better, but their use, I have found, sometimes begs questions which I wish to discuss. In most examples the usage is not quite so unfortunate as it might be, as I usually mean in these what the man in the street means, namely, 'in my mind,' and 'outside in the physical world.'

no such thing as an 'act' of mind. Mr. Russell formerly thought belief or judgment to be what he called a 'multiple relation' of mind or subject to its objects. With the denial of mind or the subject (which denial is the outcome of Mr. Russell's leanings towards Behaviourism) this theory has of course had to be altered. The new theory makes the real issue of correspondence very clear indeed, and involves assumptions about imagery which we shall find it important to criticise.

A

§ 2. Mr. Russell's Earlier Theory

For Mr. Russell there are three desiderata which a satisfactory theory of truth must fulfil. (1) It must allow truth to have an opposite, namely, falsehood; (2) it must make truth a property of beliefs (or judgments), and yet (3) it must make it a property wholly dependent upon the relation of the beliefs to things.[1] Of (1) we may remark that neither of the monistic theories which we examined seemed to be able to give satisfactory account of error. In (2) Mr. Russell desires to distinguish beliefs and statements, of which truth is to be a property, from the facts which these statements attempt to describe. In common language we often blur this distinction by saying 'that's a fact,' when we really mean 'that statement is true.' Without beliefs neither truth nor falsehood would have any meaning. Yet (3) beliefs, although truth or falsehood is their property, depend for that truth or falsehood upon a relation to some quite independent fact or event which lies outside the belief.

[1] *The Problems of Philosophy*, p. 193.

It is this third desideratum, which expresses the position of common sense, that makes Mr. Russell believe that the nature of truth must be some kind of correspondence of things *in* a judgment, to other things independent of the judgment. "Hence we are driven back to *correspondence with fact* as constituting the nature of truth."[1] What then, more precisely, does this 'correspondence' mean? Mr. Russell explains with his remarkable lucidity what he means both in *The Problems of Philosophy*[2] and in *Philosophical Essays*,[3] but as the latter is now out of print, I would refer the reader to the former, offering here the briefest possible statement.

As a preliminary, Mr. Russell rejects two theories of the kind of object mind may have before it in judgment, because he thinks it is difficult in these theories to account for falsehood. In the first place, mind cannot have, when judging, a single object, because supposing, like Othello, we judge *falsely* that Desdemona loves Cassio, the object before our minds, namely, Desdemona's love for Cassio, does not exist; if it did our judgment would be true. So judgment cannot consist in the relation of mind to this non-existent object.

The second difficulty is a slight variation of the first. If we say (in Meinong's terms) that 'objectives' (*e.g.* 'that Desdemona loves Cassio') are what is before the mind, we are no better off. For in the first place, even in true judgments there are no such objects as "that Desdemona loves Cassio," and in the second place, supposing there were, there would,

[1] *The Problems of Philosophy*, p. 193.

[2] Pp. 193-203.

[3] His exposition in this work is a slight modification of an earlier paper delivered to the Aristotelian Society in 1906–7.

in order to account for false judgments, have to be false objectives. And to suppose falsehoods existing in the world independent of minds that made them, is probably, Mr. Russell thinks, untenable. So judgment cannot be a relation of mind to a single object or objective.

What then is the relation involved in judgment? The answer is that it is a relation of the mind or subject to *several* terms and relations, called objects. When Othello believes or judges that Desdemona loves Cassio, the objects are Desdemona, Cassio, and the relation of loving (in the 'sense' or 'direction' that Desdemona loves Cassio rather than *vice versâ*), and Othello's belief or judgment is what knits Othello, Desdemona, loving, and Cassio into a complex unity. Othello's belief unites the subject and the objects in relation in a certain 'sense' or 'direction.'

Now as to the truth or falsehood of the judgment. If, corresponding to the complex formed by Othello's *belief*, which knits Othello, Desdemona, loving, and Cassio, there exists a complex fact in which Desdemona is knit to Cassio by her *love* for him, if, in other words, there exists another complex containing all the elements (related in the same sense) except Othello, then the judgment is true. If not, it is false. In the complex containing the mind or subject (*i.e.* Cassio) it is *belief*, not love, which actually knits or cements Desdemona, and loving, and Cassio. Love the relation is here, in Mr. Russell's words, "a brick in the structure, not the cement." But in the actual fact, love, which was before but a 'brick,' now becomes the 'cement' uniting Desdemona and Cassio.

In *Philosophical Essays*, page 181, Mr. Russell draws a distinction between judgment and perception.

The single objective which was found inapplicable in the case of judgment will, he thinks, apply to perception, because perception as such is never mistaken, although judgments based, even immediately, upon perception may be. In perception we are given, instantaneously, a complex object, and this object must exist, otherwise we should not be perceiving. So a *judgment* of perception, although not absolutely infallible, just because it is a judgment and not itself perception, is more likely to be true than any other.

We shall not here discuss the distinction between perception and judgment of perception, leaving it to be treated in a later chapter under the heading of knowledge by acquaintance,[1] but we may remark that it seems equally tenable to say that we *think* of a complex unity, say knife-to-left-of-book, as it is to say that we perceive it, and that to hold this view is not to exclude the possibility of error. But of this more later.[2]

§ 3. Criticism of Mr. Russell's Earlier Theory

(*a*) Before proceeding with general criticisms let us note that Mr. Russell speaks indifferently of 'statements' or 'beliefs' or 'judgments.'[3] He says: "It seems fairly evident that if there were no beliefs there could be no falsehood, and no truth either, . . . truth and falsehood are properties of beliefs and statements,"[4] and again " . . . belief or judgment is nothing but this relation of believing or judging, which relates a mind to several other things than itself."[5] Now there is of course a sense in which it is true that if there were no beliefs there could be no

[1] See Chap. VII. § 6. [2] See Chap. VIII. § 6.

[3] *Philosophical Essays*, p. 172.

[4] *Problems of Philosophy*, pp. 188-89. [5] *Ibid.* p. 199.

truth or falsehood, the sense, that is, that if no one had ever believed in anything, the question of truth or falsehood would not arise. Assertions are normally the outcome of a conviction or belief about reality, and truth and falsehood are, broadly speaking, the properties of assertions. But although this is generally true, it need not follow that it is true in every particular case. I may make a perfectly ridiculous assertion or statement without believing in it, such as that the moon is made of green cheese. In this case it is not belief, but a kind of supposition (though the proposition is categorical) which unites (in Russell's sense) the elements into one complex whole. The same criticism which holds of belief would hold also of Mr. Russell's use of the term 'judgment,' because to judge does seem to imply belief. Joachim says:[1] "A 'judgment,' in ordinary logical usage, is a hybrid, in which psychical elements (such as belief, apprehension, etc.) are unwarrantably blended with the purely logical fact, . . . the proposition." Admitting then that assertions or statements or propositions are normally and generally the outcome of judgments involving belief, they are yet not necessarily so, and it would seem that, if you are going to defend a *correspondence* theory of truth, it is safer to work with propositions than with 'hybrid' judgments.

(β) This criticism is not merely one about words. It cuts deep, and that it is important is shown by the fact that Mr. Russell in his later theory speaks of truth as a property of propositions, and that he also distinguishes believing from what is believed. The lack of such distinction in this earlier theory makes it very difficult indeed to understand how a complex

[1] *The Nature of Truth*, p. 36.

containing mind and related within itself by belief can possibly *correspond* with a complex containing the same elements except mind but now cemented by a relation which before did no work but was merely an object, a brick among bricks. Prof. Stout pointed out this difficulty long ago.[1] Mr. Russell now speaks of belief as a feeling,[2] and accepts William James' account of it as . . . "a sort of feeling more allied to the emotions than anything else." If in his earlier theory Mr. Russell had done this, and had clearly distinguished the belief-feeling from the proposition which is believed, it would have been easier (though it would not necessarily have yielded a satisfactory result) to understand how the proposition, composed of brick-terms, cemented or otherwise, could have 'corresponded' with the reality.[3]

(γ) Again, is it not manifestly more true that belief is a feeling *that* things are related rather than that it is a relation itself? We are told that the relation called judging knits into one complex whole the subject and the objects. Would it not be truer to say that in judging the subject rather stands off from the objects, which it apprehends as related, and that the relation of subject to objects, if it can be called a 'relation' at all, is just the unique 'relation' of knowledge and that it does not really unite or cement anything at all, but judges to be really related?

[1] *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, 1914–15. [2] *Analysis of Mind*, p. 233.

[3] All this, and what follows, may sound rather like flogging a dead horse because Mr. Russell's later theory is something like the imaginary one just described. But Mr. Russell's modification of his earlier theory does not appear to be due to a whole-hearted recognition of its deficiencies, but to the fact that Mr. Russell now no longer believes in any mental 'act.' Furthermore, a critical analysis of the theory of belief is thoroughly valuable, since it is necessary to understand (*a*) whether a mental 'act' exists, and (*b*) how it 'unites' the elements in judgment. And it is with his theory, and not with Mr. Russell's intellectual biography, that we are concerned.

This last point is vital. We must not indeed overlook the important element of truth in Russell's doctrine that belief or judgment (I should add supposition) can unite elements in a judgment. When I say that Perseus slew Medusa, or that the cow jumped over the moon, or that Mr. Lloyd George has a passion for truth, or even that Mr. Asquith headed the Liberal Government in 1914, I am in a sense uniting elements to form a judgment.[1] Thought has a synthetic character which it would be foolish to deny. And it is perfectly true, I think, that error arises, or the world of imagination arises, through shuffling thoughts in wrong or in arbitrary ways. But it is nevertheless absolutely essential to remember that thoughts are not mere thoughts, but are thoughts of real things, and (which is most important) thoughts of real relations which really relate real things. So when Othello believes that Desdemona loves Cassio, not merely does his belief or judgment bring before him the objects Desdemona, and loving, and Cassio, as so many bricks, and in this sense relates them, but also he thinks of the relation of loving as really relating Desdemona and Cassio. The judgment may unite the bricks in the sense of bringing them before the mind side by side, but it is not merely three brick-terms side by side which are Othello's objects, but two brick-objects and a cement-object which is thought of as relating, as cementing, the brick-objects. Thus Russell's statement,[2] "judging is exactly like every other relation" in the sense that it knits together into one whole subject and objects, seems to be quite false. If Othello's belief had knit Desdemona and Cassio in the sense in which love can unite two people, his belief would have

[1] I do not mean I am *merely* doing this. [2] *Problems of Philosophy*, p. 199.

been true, and the play would have been different. Belief, then, is not a mere relation which knits terms, but is a unique mental attitude towards terms regarded as knit.

We thus think, not simply of terms *and* relations, but of terms *in* relation. Othello thinks not merely of Desdemona, and loving, and Cassio, but quite obviously, of Desdemona as loving Cassio. This has an important bearing on Russell's criticism of single objectives.

(δ) When Russell rejected the single objective of mind in judgment, his main reason, it will be remembered, was that it made error hard to account for. If Othello falsely believes that Desdemona loves Cassio, then Desdemona's love for Cassio, or ' that Desdemona loves Cassio ' has no place in the real world unless we postulate objective falsehoods. But, we may ask, why should we suppose that the *content* before Othello's mind in truth or falsehood is *identical* with any *fact* in the real world at all ? [1] When we say that Othello thinks of Desdemona as loving Cassio, is that not sufficient, and must we go beyond it and say that Othello *cannot* so think unless it is a fact that Desdemona loves Cassio ? Is the object of Othello's thought not just Desdemona-loving-Cassio-*as-thought* of, or if you prefer, Desdemona *thought* of as loving Cassio, and not any actual existing fact in its existence ? [2] Of course Othello *thinks* of real existing people in a real relation, but it should be obvious that his thinking of

[1] Russell in his earlier theory carefully distinguishes *content* from *objective*, the former being mental, the latter an independent fact. But we shall find reason for identifying content broadly with objective, and distinguishing both from fact.

[2] As one of the main aims of writing this book is to establish this and similar theses (which will appear to the reader as either obvious or absurd), I cannot explain myself satisfactorily here. See latter half of Chap. VI., and Chap. VII.

them thus is in no way affected by any other fact which may or may not exist, namely, the fact that Desdemona does love Cassio (supposing it for the moment to be true). We can think or suppose or imagine anything which fits our fancy; it is only when we come to test its truth or falsity that the relation of supposed or believed fact to existing fact comes in. To distinguish between facts existing, and facts thought of as existing, seems to me to be fundamental for any satisfactory theory of truth, although I agree of course that you cannot get at facts existing except *through* knowledge, and the failure to recognise this constitutes a grave error in most correspondence theories.

(ε) An objective is not an entity at all. Russell admits so much with regard to Meinong's account of an objective (*e.g.* that Desdemona loves Cassio), but not with regard to the objective taken in the more usual and ordinary sense as being an 'object' (*e.g.* Desdemona's love for Cassio). Indeed he implies that in the case of a true judgment the complex 'object' does actually exist, and that if there were only truth and no falsehood (as in a direct analysis of perception), the single complex objective (using henceforth the term in the ordinary sense of 'object,' and not in Meinong's special sense) would be quite satisfactory, because it would really exist. But, as we have said, an objective is not an entity and it does not *exist* at all, even in the case of truth. An objective is something thought of as existing or referred to its place in the real world. An objective is thus, *if* we insist on regarding it by itself, epistemologically an abstraction. This is not to say that it is merely 'mental' any more than it is merely 'real.' All thought is essentially

self-transcendent, it is a going forth of the mind to grasp an object, and in any true view we must realise that in the concrete act of judgment both factors, subjective and objective, are inseparably present. We shall find later that a firm tenacity on this fundamental point will revolutionise our whole view of truth. It is far safer to regard objectives as *functions* of self-transitive thought than to crystallise them into abstract entities (though of course this is legitimate enough if its limitations as a method are understood), and to ask, "do these entities exist?" The answer is, "no, as entities they never do, they have no *place* either in the 'real' or in the 'mental' world, even in the truest judgment."

In addition to his misleading criticism of single objectives, which falls as soon as we realise that the existence of objectives at all, and not only in error, is a contradiction in terms, Mr. Russell, it seems to me, exhibits inconsistency between his treatment of 'objects' (elements in a belief, *e.g.* Desdemona, love, Cassio) in his own theory and objectives in the theory he is criticising. The *objective* before Othello's mind when he is in error, cannot, he says, be 'Desdemona's love for Cassio,' or, 'that Desdemona loves Cassio,' because respectively they do not, and cannot *exist*. (We have already criticised the term 'exists' as applied to objectives.) But when offering his own theory of truth he takes the *objects* (*i.e.* Desdemona, love, Cassio) before the mind of Othello not as *existences*, apparently, but as figments of thought or belief. Mr. Russell is not clear on this point; it is hard to say whether he holds that the objects of judgment are mental, although it looks as if they ought to be, because the 'relation' of belief is what knits them, and we have already seen

how absurd it is to suppose that Othello's belief *really* knits Desdemona and Cassio.[1] The probability is increased, indeed seems almost to become a certainty, when Mr. Russell says,[2] "When the belief is *true*, there is *another*[3] complex unity, in which the relation which was one of the objects of the beliefs relates the other objects." I admit that the last clause is confusing and looks as if Mr. Russell thought that the brick-relation which is (according to what seems to be Mr. Russell's view) on the mental side, suddenly steps over, in the case of truth, and cements 'real' persons, or if not this, that it somehow exists at the same time mentally as a brick, and 'really' as cement, *i.e.*, that the mental brick and the real cement are the same identical thing. This is not so wholly untenable as it sounds, but I do not think, taking the whole theory into account, that it is Mr. Russell's view. If it were his view we should have to enquire why there should be *another* complex at all, that is, why, if a relation can do double service as a mental brick-object and a 'real' cement-relation, the other objects, Desdemona and Cassio, should not equally be both 'mental' and 'real.' But all this, though not an impossible theory, is quite obviously not Mr. Russell's; and the only general conclusion that we can come to is that Mr. Russell thinks the objects of the judgment are in *some* way 'mental' and the *other* complex real. That this conclusion is a correct interpretation seems to be borne out by the more recent developments of Mr. Russell's theory. But it is extremely hard to say.

Still, if we suppose this to be so, we have the

[1] On the other hand, Mr. Russell is in some directions a 'New Realist,' and we have seen how New Realists believe that mind relates real things.

[2] *Problems of Philosophy*, p. 200.

[3] The second italics are mine.

inconsistency of treatment above referred to. In the criticised theory of *objectives*, where it is implied that objectives are facts, that (*e.g.*) 'Desdemona's love for Cassio' is a fact, error cannot, he says, be accounted for, because the objectives do not *exist* in the case of error, *e.g.* Desdemona's love is *not* a fact. Now this criticism is inconsistent. For apparently Mr. Russell himself seems to take the *objects* or elements of belief as 'mental.' If so, why not suppose *objectives* also mental? Either (on Mr. Russell's premises, not on mine) the objects of judgment are 'mental,' or they are 'real.' If the elements or objects are 'mental,' then the fact that Desdemona's love for Cassio taken as a complex whole does not exist is irrelevant, and the criticism fails. If they are 'real,' then Mr. Russell's own term 'correspondence' does not properly describe truth, and either (if we suppose belief is only a mental relating) things, *e.g.* Desdemona, love, Cassio, must, because of the rejection of single objectives, remain eternally separate, or (if beliefs really relate real things) our beliefs will always be true. Anyhow, as there would only be the real, it would be impossible on this theory to account for error.

These criticisms sound, perhaps, a little specious. Certainly they are not exhaustive or exclusive, they might in some respects cleverly and deftly be turned aside by others equally 'subtle.' No one imagines, I certainly do not, that an important philosophical theory can be unhanded by a little logic-chopping. Nevertheless, given the alternatives, that the elements within judgment must be mental or real, we are faced with a very serious difficulty which is usually missed altogether, although writers like Prof. Stout, Prof. Dawes Hicks, Mr. H. A. Prichard, Prof. Hoernlé,

and others, have frequently touched upon the point. It appears to lead to impossible results if we take the immediate content of knowledge to be either mental or real, whilst it sounds confusing to avoid the dilemma by saying it is both, and it sounds mysterious to say that it is neither. The problem is one which we have already touched upon, and to which we shall have to refer again and again. The attempt to solve it we must leave to a later chapter.

(ζ) But in concluding our criticism of Mr. Russell's earlier theory of truth, and before going on to consider his later theory, it is worth while to enquire for a moment into the validity of one or two general statements which Mr. Russell makes about the correspondence view. On p. 189, *Problems of Philosophy*, Mr. Russell says that "the truth or falsehood of a belief always depends upon something which lies outside the belief itself." This seems very sound and sensible, but Mr. Russell himself draws attention on the next page to the difficulties which may arise from accepting it unthinkingly. The difficulties are the obvious ones, that if "truth consists in a correspondence of thought [note the unmistakable reference to the mental] with something outside thought, thought can never know when truth has been attained." And after rejecting the coherence theory, which is an attempt to evade this difficulty, he says (p. 193) that although coherence is a most important *test* of truth, yet only *correspondence with fact* constitutes the *nature* of truth. We have to ask, then, does Mr. Russell himself escape the difficulty which correspondence with something which is outside thought raises? And again, does 'correspondence' describe the real *nature* of truth?

In parliamentary phraseology, 'the answer to the first of these questions is in the negative, and therefore the second does not arise.' We have seen what the dilemma of 'mental or real' means for Mr. Russell. Taking it that the objects of judgment are mental and that (linked together by the relation of belief to the subject) they correspond with a non-mental real when the judgment is true, there *is* no way of knowing when a judgment is true and when it is not. Now although it is conceivably possible that our mental judgments might correspond with non-mental facts without our ever knowing it (the nature of truth is to be distinguished from the criterion of truth, its *ratio essendi* from its *ratio cognoscendi*) and that this might be what truth means, yet the fact is that we do believe that we have some *more or less* satisfactory ways of knowing when a belief is true or not. Now if truth *were*, exclusively and solely, correspondence of the mental known with the wholly unknown, we should never have the *slightest* knowledge that our beliefs were true or false. We should be wholly ignorant. But we are not (I suppose) so wholly ignorant. There are degrees of probability. Therefore we are justified in concluding that truth does not literally *mean* correspondence of thought with the real. Correspondence, then, although it may be a test,[1] does not describe the real nature of truth.

B

§ 4. Mr. Russell's Later Theory

I now proceed to state and examine the theory of truth put forward by Mr. Russell in his address to

[1] See § 8.

the *Aristotelian Society* in 1919, and very clearly re-expressed in his *Analysis of Mind*. I shall deal mainly with the account given in the latter work, with some references to the *Aristotelian* paper.

The first thing to be noticed is that Mr. Russell now quite explicitly states, as he did not do (although of course he realised it) in his earlier works, the distinction between *what* is believed and the *act* of belief. *What* is believed he calls the 'content' of belief, and this, when it is expressed in words, is very much the same thing as the logical proposition, *e.g.* 'that Columbus discovered America.' As regards the 'act,' although Mr. Russell does not now believe in an 'act' of thought, regarding it simply as a postulate and not as empirically discoverable, he yet retains the 'act' of belief because that, he thinks, is an actual experienced feeling. We have then, so far, an act of belief and a content of belief.

But this is not all. Belief does not stop with the relation to its content, it has a reference to fact, called its 'objective reference.' Whether you believe truly or falsely about a fact, it is the very same fact which is your 'objective,' and to which you refer. This is important, because it conditions essentially Mr. Russell's view of truth or falsehood. This view may be expressed in his own words[1] "the true belief points towards the fact while the false one points away from it." "You may believe the proposition 'to-day is Tuesday' both when, in fact, to-day is Tuesday, and when to-day is not Tuesday. If to-day is not Tuesday, this fact is the objective of your belief that to-day is Tuesday. But obviously the relation of your belief to the fact is different in this

[1] *Analysis of Mind*, p. 272.

case from what it is in the case when to-day is Tuesday." [1] Or to state the thing positively, "If on a Tuesday, one man believes that it is Tuesday while another believes that it is not Tuesday, their beliefs have the same objective, namely, the fact that it is Tuesday." [2] This repetition in two ways is not unnecessary, for not only does it re-stress that objectives are facts, but (taking the first statement) that there are negative facts (that to-day is *not* Tuesday) as well as positive. The significance of this will appear later. Note in the meantime that by making the objective the same in the case of truth and error the difficulty of objectively existing falsehoods is avoided.

To make the statement clearer, Mr. Russell finds it necessary to distinguish word propositions from image propositions. Previous to this he says: [3] "the content of a belief may consist of words only, or of images only, or of a mixture of the two, or of either or both together with one or more sensations." A word proposition is one which consists of words and an image proposition is one which consists of images only. If for example we have an image of a room in which the image of the window is to the left of the image of the door, that is an image proposition. If we express what we are imaging in words and say 'the window is to the left of the door,' that is a word proposition. Image and word propositions are thus different as regards 'content,' but they may, as in this example, have the same 'objective,' namely, the fact that the window is to the left of the door.

It is important to understand the relation of words to images, which Mr. Russell discusses at some length. For our purposes it is sufficient to notice

[1] *Analysis of Mind*, p. 272. [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Ibid.* p. 236.

that words depend primarily upon association for their meaning, whilst images depend upon similarity. Further, " to think of the meaning of a word is to call up images of what it means," [1] so that words function through images. " If we are right, the use of words in thinking depends, at least in its origin, upon images. . . . And this is really the most essential function of words, namely that, originally through their connection with images, they bring us into touch with what is remote in time or space." [2] Again, images depend upon memory, that is, they are (Mr. Russell thinks) accompanied by belief, or a feeling that they are copies of something we have experienced before.

All this being so, it will seem that the image proposition is very important. Mr. Russell indeed, although he admits that his treatment is very inadequate, practically concludes his account of truth when he has dealt with the image proposition, and only adds a very few remarks as to word propositions. He takes the very simple case of the room in which the window is to the left of the door. If we have before our mind an image of a room in which the image of the window is to the left of the image of the door, that is, if the image proposition *resembles* the fact, then the image proposition is true. If the image proposition consists of an image of the *door* to the left of the window, there is obviously not correspondence and this is error. Passing on, Mr. Russell says, " Perhaps it may be possible to modify this notion of formal correspondence in such a way as to be more widely applicable, but if so, the modifications required will be by no means slight." [3] The difficulties arise in

[1] *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, 1919, p. 19. [2] *Analysis of Mind*, p. 203.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 274.

the case of word propositions, of negative facts and propositions, and certain other cases.

In the case of word propositions, it is obvious that the relations between the words are symbolic of the relations rather than relations themselves. (It is very tempting to say that the relations between words do not *resemble* the relations between facts, because it looks as if by correspondence, Mr. Russell *ought* to mean this. To speak thus would be misleading, however, because he does not say it is a *similar* relation which relates the image of door and window, but says it is " the very same relation " which relates the real door and window. (See Prof. Joachim's criticism of this, below.) Thus there is an additional relation, *i.e.* between the word and the relation it means, which makes the simplest kind of correspondence unworkable.

Now as to negative facts and propositions. Mr. Russell holds that there are negative facts. Let us accept that here, reserving our criticism for the moment. An example of a negative fact is that the window is not to the left of the door. The mere fact of its not being so is as good a fact for Mr. Russell as anything else. The difficulty for correspondence is, there are no merely negative image propositions and there are no word propositions which are themselves negative facts. You cannot *image* 'the window is not to the left of the door' merely, though you may very well disbelieve it. Again, though it *means* a negative fact, a word proposition, just because it is sensible, and so, positive, cannot *symbolise* the mere negative fact. . . . " We cannot symbolise the fact that Plato does not precede Socrates by not putting the word ' precedes ' between ' Plato ' and ' Socrates.' "[1] (It looks

[1] *Analysis of Mind*, p. 276.

here as if Mr. Russell really does mean by 'symbolise' nothing more nor less than 'resemble.')

Again, in the case of temporal images, can we truly say that the belief that A precedes B is the same thing as to say that the image of A precedes the image of B? Mr. Russell admits the difficulty, but thinks, anyhow in his *Aristotelian Society* paper (p. 40), that we can. He thinks it, however, not possible that[1] 'Caesar was two thousand years before Foch' means that two thousand years elapsed between the two images. Or, if we think that 'the sun is brighter than the moon,' does that merely mean the co-existence of two images, one brighter than the other? Mr. Russell says 'no,' but leaves the subject there, only remarking, "In spite of these complications, the general nature of the formal correspondence which makes truth is clear from our instances. . . . I do not believe that the above formal theory is untrue, but I do believe that it is inadequate."[2] We must now enquire whether this is not too lenient a view.

§ 5. Criticism of Mr. Russell's Later Theory

(*a*) Let us notice in the first place that the dualism which we found in Mr. Russell's earlier theory is more clearly marked in the later. Still, even here, this position is not wholly without obscurity. As in the former theory the only thing which marred the perfection of its dualism was the difficulty of understanding how belief could relate Desdemona just in the same way as love could, so here the difficulty, already alluded to, is how the very same relation can couple the mental images which couples the real things. If we take the example

[1] *Analysis of Mind*, p. 277. [2] *Ibid.* p. 278.

of the fireplace and the window, seen a week ago, " We are asked," says Prof. Joachim, criticising, " to believe that ' the very same relation ' which coupled these vanished sensations, is *now* coupling the constituent images of my image proposition. Has this relation survived, bare of all terms, for a week ? " [1] The thing is absurd, and must for the present be left. Mr. Russell, of course, means by ' relation,' not a particular but a Universal. We shall see below (Chapter VIII. § 3 (δ)) that qualities and relations are not true Universals. There, however, for the present, the difficulty remains.

Apart from this, the dualism displayed is very clear indeed. You have the belief, the content of the belief, and the objective or fact to which your belief refers. It is important to note that although your belief refers always to the objective, yet the objective is not *what* you believe. *What* you believe is the content, and content is absolutely distinct from the fact towards which belief is directed. The content is mental, " What I am believing is something now in my mind." [2] The content is again a present fact, whilst the objective may have happened two thousand years ago. Truth is the relation of correspondence between the content now and the facts then.

(β) This state of affairs appears to offer very great disadvantages. Mr. Russell describes one disadvantage, but he does not believe it to be real. The apparent disadvantage is really the same as that hinted at in *Problems of Philosophy*, p. 190. Stating it now,[3] Mr. Russell says, "Between content and objective there is sometimes a very wide gulf, for example in the case of ' Caesar crossed the Rubicon.' This gulf may,

[1] *Mind*, 1920, p. 414. [2] *Analysis of Mind*, p. 233. [3] *Ibid.* p. 234.

when it is first perceived, give us a feeling that we cannot really 'know' anything about the outer world. All we can 'know,' it may be said, is what is now in our thoughts. . . . I shall not now deal at length with this feeling. . . . But I will say, as a preliminary answer, that the feeling assumes an ideal of knowing which I believe to be quite mistaken: it assumes, if it is thought out, something like the mystic unity of knower and known. . . . For my part, I think such theories and feelings wholly mistaken: I believe knowing to be a very external and complicated relation. . . ."

(γ) Perhaps it may be so: it is a fault to be tempted by a love of artificial simplicity, and certainly Mr. Russell has a unique genius for complicated theories. But leaving aside such general questions, we have to ask simply, does it describe the facts to say that when I believe Caesar crossed the Rubicon what I believe is something now in my mind?

Our previous brief discussion of objectives should make the general direction of the answer plain. When I believe that Caesar crossed the Rubicon, I am *not* believing about events that take place merely in my mind. I am believing about things and persons and relations that are real historical facts in real space and time. A real Caesar, and a real Rubicon, and a real activity of crossing, are the objects of my thought, and I believe them to be related in a certain way. If I am in error these real facts which I think of as really related in that way, are none the less thought of as real facts existing in real space and time, though I may be mistaken in their nature, and think of their relations wrongly.[1] To think of real facts, to have real

[1] I hope to make these somewhat paradoxical and perhaps obscure statements clearer in the sequel, Chap. VIII. § 6.

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facts as the object of my thought does not mean, as Mr. Russell seems to think it must, that the real facts must be inside my mind, or that it involves any mystic connection between knower and known. Nor does it identify the real fact, existing two thousand years ago, with my thought of the real fact as existing. All that it does assert is that knowledge, however complicated its mechanism may be, is a direct relationship of the mind to its object, that when I think of Caesar crossing the Rubicon, it is Caesar that I am thinking of, and not a mental figment inside my own mind. Whilst Mr. Russell then, distinguishes between the objective, the fact, towards which the belief is directed, and the present content of belief, I should, while holding as he does that belief is directed towards the fact which took place two thousand years ago, also contend that the objective, though distinguishable from the fact, is simply the fact *as thought of*. If we care, we may identify the objective with the content, but this is rather dangerous, as we would be liable to think, as Mr. Russell does, of the content as existing now, in the mind. If we are to call it content at all, and it is a convenient, though dangerous, term, we must remember that it is not *in* my mind, and it is not *now*. Moreover, it is not even *then* (2000 years ago). It is the real event, not in itself, apart from my thinking of it, but the real-event-as-thought-of-by-me. The objective or content (the dangerous term) is the product[1] of my thinking and the real event. Its objectivity and apparent independence of my thinking comes from the side of the real event: its apparent mental character comes from the fact that I think it. We

[1] I hope to defend also the use of this perhaps objectionable term, and to make clear that though in a sense it is a product it is yet not an entity.

shall find as we go on that there is increasing reason to believe that any theory which neglects the essentially compound nature of what we immediately believe or know, or which fails to realise the transitive character of cognitive processes, is foredoomed to failure.

(δ) To hold that the objective is the real-fact-as-thought-of, is, then, to escape the gulf of dualism, without falling into a subjectivism which denies that there are two sides to knowledge. It also escapes the difficulties of a realism for which the bodily presence of the object is necessary for knowledge. We are not obliged to construct elaborate theories of space and time to prove that when I think of Caesar crossing the Rubicon, Caesar is really present before me now. If we are to place the objective anywhere (and we have seen that ' where ' is but a misleading metaphor) it is *then* rather than *now*, for we think of it so. Caesar, not now, but then, is my object, though the thinking is now. But far better refrain from using time adjectives at all regarding the objective, which is, as we saw, epistemologically speaking, an abstraction. We believe now, the fact was then, the objective is timeless. It is the-fact-then-as-believed-now.

(ε) The fallacy of regarding the content as a mental entity may be shown by making one or two references to Russell. " For example, you hear a noise, and you say to yourself ' tram.' Here the noise and the word ' tram ' are both constituents of your belief ; there is also a relation between them, expressed by ' is ' in the proposition ' that is a tram.' " [1] Now, is it not absurd to say that the noise and the words are the constituents of your belief, that is, the only constituents ? The

[1] *Analysis of Mind*, p. 237.

perception of the noise, in the first place, although achieved through sensation, which as experienced is mental, is the perception of a physical non-mental occurrence. The word 'tram' again, although it is experienced by a mind, and is again, as a noise, a physical event, has also another relation to the physical, namely, in its reference or meaning. The word 'tram,' like most words, is symbolic of real things in a real world. As a noise it has, as we have just seen, its physical and its mental aspect, but the excuse for its existence is its function. A word is not a mere mental entity, any more than the noise of the tram is a mere mental entity. What we believe is not anything about the relation of two noises in our heads, but that trams in the street make an unmistakably real noise. The content of the proposition then is not mental. It transcends the mental altogether. The curious thing is that Mr. Russell should in some ways so clearly realise this, and yet that, when he comes to deal with belief in the concrete, he should not apply it.

(ζ) For example, he says,[1] "It is impossible for belief to consist of sensation alone, except when, as in the case of words, the sensations have associations which make them signs possessed of meaning. The reason is that objective reference is of the essence of belief, and objective reference is derived from meaning." In this and in the passages following it (almost all of which we might quote with unqualified approval) Mr. Russell seems to acknowledge that belief is transitive. He always holds, of course, that it has a reference. But now he appears to be contending that the content is something more than mental, and overflows as it were, to its reference. "Thus the word

[1] *Analysis of Mind*, p. 238.

[tram] occurs in the belief as a symbol, in virtue of its meaning, whereas the noise [of the tram] enters into both the belief and its objective."[1] True enough; but what then of the 'gulf' which Mr. Russell thinks so necessary?

(η) What we may also call the *transparency*[2] of 'contents' and propositions is seen when we translate a simple image proposition into a word proposition. If first you picture the window to the left of the door, and then say, 'the window is to the left of the door,' the *content* is different in both cases, but the objective reference is the same, according to Mr. Russell. We can, of course, make such a distinction, but is it not wholly misleading to make it central for the theory of knowledge? Why not take words and 'mental pictures' for what they are, that is, for what they *do*? Words are surely just instruments, vehicles of knowledge, by means of which we fix, more or less accurately, the objective world. Imaging, again, is just thinking of the real world, and images are the real world as appearing in a certain way. This is what I meant, using a metaphor, when I said that we can call contents *transparent*. We do not look at them, we look through them at things. We must reject altogether as essential or important the kind of statement like that already quoted, "to think of the meaning of a word is to call up images of what it means." To think of meaning is not to think of images, but to think of things. To a fuller discussion of images and imaging we shall find it necessary to return in a few pages.

(θ) The identification of an objective in Mr.

[1] *Analysis of Mind*, p. 239.

[2] It is important to remember, if the metaphor is insisted on, that a 'transparent' medium can be 'coloured.'

Russell's later theory with a fact has certain difficulties connected with the account of truth and error proper. (I prefer the term 'error' or 'falsity' to 'falsehood,' which term Prof. Carr, I think, rejects because it suggests moral considerations. This is, of course, a matter of taste.) If on Tuesday I say 'to-day is Tuesday,' and another man believes that it is not Tuesday, it is most misleading, I think, to say that both have the same objective, namely, the fact *that it is Tuesday*. If Mr. Russell had said that the objective of both was the unanalysed fact of 'this,' which, without criticism, both agree to call 'to-day,' I should agree, except that I would call it fact only and not objective. What I mean is this. We are both of us, I and my friend, 'given' for analysis and predication the more or less vague fact that we call to-day. What we want to describe in our proposition is a specific attribute of this given, namely, its relation to the other days of the week, which we may call the 'Tuesday-relation.' Certainly there is a fact, which we call 'to-day,' and it is this same fact that both I and my friend refer to when I say that it is Tuesday and he says it is not. I do not think, as Mr. Russell does, that the objective (in Mr. Russell's sense) is the fact 'to-day is Tuesday' because although, if it is Tuesday, 'to-day' does in fact possess the Tuesday-relation, and it is this fact which makes my belief true and my friend's belief false, yet the fact to which belief refers, the fact which we both believe different things about, is the unanalysed fact called 'to-day,' not the analysed fact that it is Tuesday. And the fact to which belief refers is (in Russell's sense) the objective. It seems to me unnatural to suppose that it is the fact that to-day is *Tuesday* which my friend refers to when he says that

it is not Tuesday. It is, as we saw, simply the 'given' called 'to-day.'

Further, if the objective is this, falsity is not *simply* pointing away from the objective. What makes my proposition true and my friend's proposition false is not that I point to the fact 'to-day' (or even, as Mr. Russell holds, 'that to-day is Tuesday') and he does not, but the fact that I attribute a Tuesday-relation to 'to-day' and he attributes a not-Tuesday-relation to to-day. (I assume for the moment with Mr. Russell negative facts. Personally, I should maintain that a not-Tuesday-relation meant a Wednesday-, or a Thursday-, or some other relation. But he thinks this superfluous.) In my own terminology I should call the propositions 'to-day is Tuesday' and 'to-day is not Tuesday' the objectives *or* contents of my belief and his respectively, and I should say that these propositions are true or false by reason of a certain relation they have (which I do not now define[1]) to a real and very complex fact or system of facts, which may contain many attributes of which we know nothing, but which possesses the attribute among others, that (we will suppose) it is Tuesday.

(*i*) At the risk of appearing diffuse, let me make myself clearer, and endeavour to sharpen the use of terminology by referring to another example. Suppose, looking out over the coast at the horizon, Smith and Jones perceive a light and Smith says it is a ship, whilst Jones says it certainly is only a star. Suppose that Smith is right. I should say that in this example there are the following items to be distinguished. Suppose we say that the one (true) proposition is 'that's a ship,' and the other, 'that's a star.' Well,

[1] See Chap. VIII. § 6.

in the *first* place, we have a fact, existing at a particular time and place, with a very large number of qualities and relations. That fact we may call 'ship,' but it is important to observe that it is not certain aspects of the ship as noticed by you, or me, or Smith, or even by a sailor, or the captain of the ship, that is the fact of the ship. The fact is simply the existing ship itself, in all its relations, many of which may be known by no one. The fact offers problems for the mind. We say 'ship': well, what of it? and the propositions which could be made in answer are very large in number. I may say it is a twin-screw steamer, Smith believes that it carries lights, one of which is shining in his eye now, and so on. But with this we reach the *second* item to be noticed.

This is, that the fact of the ship, though very complex indeed, presents itself in pieces, as it were, to any observer who is not all-knowing, and who has, by reason of the finitude of his faculties, as well as because he is limited to one spot in time and space, to receive and examine things bit by bit. Now it is the light with which we are concerned, the light which is presented to Smith and Jones. The light is produced by the ship's lantern, etc., but neither Smith nor Jones knows that for certain as yet, though Smith thinks he does. We may call the light a fact if we please, for it certainly is one, but we must remember that, like all facts, it is set in relation to a complexity of other facts, which, if known, would all help to explain its existence. It is a fact which offers problems as to its relations, and it is these problems that Smith and Jones are wrangling about now. Note that I say Smith *and* Jones. For, although Jones thinks of the wrong explanation of the light's existence, yet the light itself,

which appears in isolation to both Smith and Jones, is the common fact which offers problems to each. Mr. Russell would say that the fact to which the beliefs both of Smith and Jones refer is the light of the ship. I would say simply, the light.

In the *third* place, there is the content, or what I prefer to call the objective (which is *not* Russell's sense). This is different for Smith and Jones. For both it is the-light-as-it-is-perceived-by-them, but Smith interprets it as 'the light of a ship' and Jones 'the light of a star.'

Fourthly, there is the question of truth and error. To solve that I agree that we must refer to some fact, not the objective (in my sense), nor the particular isolated partial fact, the light, but the whole complex which explains the light, namely, the ship-fact. Because a ship is there and then carrying lights Smith is right and Jones is wrong. I suppose this is what Mr. Russell means by truth 'pointing towards' and error 'pointing away.' So far, I should agree, but I should say that error is not mere 'pointing away,' because there are no merely negative facts, such as Mr. Russell believes in.

(κ) A word about negative facts. Mr. Russell, by his assumption of negative facts, seems to me to place his correspondence theory in a particularly unfavourable light, and in the end unnecessarily so, because there are no such things as mere negative facts. We may, in fact, use Mr. Russell's own arguments, *ad hominem*, to show that it is so. Image propositions and word propositions must always be positive facts, and therefore cannot correspond to negative ones. We may form an image of a window which is to the right of, or which is above the door,

but not an image of simply 'not-to-the-left-of-the-door.' We must always visualise what is positive and cannot visualise the negative, thinks Mr. Russell. He says,[1] "This is one strong reason for the reluctance to admit negative facts." But does not this very argument go to indicate, if not to prove, that there are no negative facts? Produce the argument and ask, can you *think* of a fact which is not positive? You may formally deny that a fact exists, or you may make a negative statement such as, 'the door is not to the left of the window,' which is quite true. But it is your statement which is negative, and not the fact. The *fact* that the door is not to the left of the window is as positive as anything could be.

This being the case, may we not conclude (*a*) that Mr. Russell's correspondence theory breaks down on its own showing, because it will not account for 'negative facts'; and (*b*) that negative facts are at least indicated, if not proved, not to exist, by the fact that we cannot image them? This conclusion is reinforced by the consideration that it is only propositions which can be negative, and not facts.

(λ) We now come to the central difficulty of Mr. Russell's correspondence theory, which has been hinted at several times. It is, of course, the difficulty that his theory is based upon a notion of images which copy their prototypes, which resemble them, as a photograph resembles its original. We have before[2] referred to Prof. Joachim's criticisms, which are very pertinent. Prof. Joachim accuses[3] Mr. Russell of taking the loose metaphors of ordinary speech at their face value and

[1] *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, 1919, p. 40. [2] P. 100.

[3] *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, 1919, Symposium on "The Meaning of Meaning," p. 406.

saying literally that when I visualise, what I visualise is a mental picture. But when I visualise, there is not a visual picture 'inside my skin' (Prof. Joachim is here quoting from Russell). Yet Mr. Russell, he thinks, does "convert the popular periphrasis into a literal description. Under his treatment, the visual picture becomes an independent event or imaginal phenomenon isolated from the visualising though still called 'visual' and 'a picture.'" "And when he says 'Antony loved Cleopatra,' he means that an Image loved an Image. It describes the unholy passion of one event inside his skin for another, and creates (or is intended to create) a corresponding disturbance inside the hearer's skin." [1] This is a *reductio ad absurdum*, but, within its limits, it is legitimate enough. Another example, which might be regarded as reducing Mr. Russell's doctrine to absurdity, is that in which he admits that two thousand years cannot elapse between my image of Caesar and that of Foch. But we have already said enough.

It remains, however, to consider in a more general way the nature and function of images, to enquire whether in the last resort we have any right to speak or think of images at all. What we have already said and quoted might be sufficient if the fallacy regarding images were confined to Mr. Russell. But it is not. Everywhere in contemporary philosophy we come on problems that seem to depend for their solution upon a clearer understanding of what images and imaging mean. There are many who would violently disagree with Mr. Russell's use of images, but who would not go so far as I think we must be prepared to do.

[1] *Ibid.* p. 412.

§ 6. Images

(*a*) It certainly seems to be empirically true when we approach the problem for the first time, that there are mental images. I close my eyes, I see, in my mind's eye, as the phrase goes, a more or less vague reproduction of the room I am sitting in. The colours are perhaps blurred and the outlines lacking in distinctness, and it may be difficult to locate objects exactly, all of which depends partly on my powers of visualising, partly on the time which has elapsed since I last saw the room. And so on. But it appears that I can 'call up to mind' things which are no longer present to the senses, and that I can, in certain cases, anyhow, compare these called-up images with the originals of which they appear to be the reproductions. Thus I may open and shut my eyes alternately in order to compare my mental picture with the real thing. If 'mental images' mean the kind of thing I 'see' with my mind's eye when my bodily eye is closed, then mental images, in that sense at least, do exist.

But what do we mean when we say 'mental image'? Loosely we may talk of it as a thing, a picture like its original, but is it just a reproduction in 'mental stuff' of something else in 'physical stuff'? Clearly, when we get on that line, the line of 'substances' and 'stuff,' we are in danger of running to a dead end or off the track altogether. We must think of 'images' quite otherwise. We may think of them (*if at all*), as we agreed to think of them a few pages back, namely, as transitive, or if we prefer the metaphor, as transparent. But all this is merely metaphorical and highly unsatisfactory. We shall be compelled to conclude

that in the end there are no images, but only *imaging* of real things.

When we ask fairly and squarely what we think of, what we have before our mind when we 'picture' a room, the only possible answer is, the literal room, with its shapes and colours in their context. Images disappear absolutely as objects of knowledge. There are no such things as images or reproductions. We do not see with our mental eyes a *picture* of objects which we cannot see with our physical eyes which are closed or out of range. We think directly of the objects themselves. In fact, the metaphor of 'calling up' is misleading, because it suggests that by some occult procedure we summon within the grey chamber of our minds ghosts of real things, of persons, of tables, of chairs. But of course 'images' are no more inside the mind than tables or chairs are inside it. Images of all things could not get inside the mind because there are no images to get inside the mind.

There are no images, but only imaging, just as (it can, I think, be maintained, if terms are carefully defined) there are no thoughts, but only thinking. When we picture or image, or think, we do not picture pictures, or image images, or think thoughts, but things, things, things. We should escape many dangers in epistemology if we substituted verbs for abstract nouns, if we thought of the essentially directive transitive activity of the mind rather than of the crystals it gives off, as it were, in the process.

Adopting this point of view we can, I think, say that what appear to be the differences between images and things perceived, are differences, first in the relation of the position of the thing to our bodies and organs of perception, and second in the psychological

and physiological differences between the processes of imaging and perceiving. In perceiving, the thing is *there*, here and now, in the bodily presence, it involves muscular, motor, affective, and other responses to it in a very definite way. In imaging, on the other hand, the thing 'imaged' is in the past or future (I am not at present thinking of 'dream castles,' which I shall refer to later) or is, if present, for practical purposes (if *e.g.* my eyes are closed) not just here in time or space. Again, my psycho-physical reactions are different; the image is recalled voluntarily, and so on. It is just the interaction of these conditions in the respective cases which accounts for our different views of the object, and there is no more essential difference (though there are of course unimportant obvious differences in detail) between them, than there is between looking at a scene in high spirits with the naked eye, and then looking at it in a depressed way through a bit of smoked glass. In the other case the smoked glass is replaced by the curtains of space and time and the psycho-physical reactions, etc., which modify the characters of the things as imaged. But in both cases the object is the same, although the appearance of it is different.

(β) There are no images, only imaging. I do not think that Prof. Laird, who, in his *Study in Realism* adopts the point of view that memory is direct and not mediated by representations or images, goes far enough in this. Prof. Laird believes, rightly, I think, that when Smith remembers his visit to the Matterhorn, he remembers the very colour that shone on the Matterhorn when Smith climbed it, although the remembered colour is more schematic.[1]

[1] *A Study in Realism*, pp. 55-56.

He goes on to say : " Memory does not mean the existence of present representatives of past things. It is the mind's awareness of the past things themselves." But in the next paragraph he adds : " Is the whole theory of memory-images simply mistaken ? That would be going too far. Although Smith's memory is not split in two, it is probable that some reconstructions in the present accompany his recollection and blend with it." He then goes on to cite physiological reconstructions, such as the quickened beating of Smith's heart as he remembers " those painful panting moments before his second wind came to him," psychological reconstructions, as when Smith feels a hero after the event, and finally what he calls the embroidery of fancy, as when Smith in his armchair thinks he *sees* the sweat pouring from his brow. In reality, of course, as Prof. Laird or any one else knows, Smith never saw the sweat on his own brow; he could only mop at it painfully with his handkerchief.

We have to ask, do these facts show that there is imagery ? I do not think that they do. We must, it seems to me, distinguish between the physiological and psychological accompaniments of imaging, and images themselves. Certainly the fact that Smith's heart, when Smith remembers, beats faster than is its wont, is a real present fact. But is it an image ? Again, when Smith seems to feel again some of his former anxiety or when he feels like a hero now and concludes that he was a hero, those are present facts. But are they images ? I think they are not. And a thing must be either an image or not an image. I do not know what Prof. Laird means when he says[1] that

[1] *A Study in Realism*, pp. 56-57.

present reconstructions *blend* with the past. When Smith's heart beats faster, or he feels anxiety, that is, I think, simply an accompaniment of his thinking of a past occurrence, and helps to vivify his recollection. Again, if in his bones he feels himself heroic now, this is a pleasant stimulus to recollection.

If, on the other hand, he vividly imagines himself as a hero scaling with fearless footstep fearsome precipices, or if he vividly imagines the sweat pouring down his brow, the case is different. But neither is it in this case imagery, though it is imaging. It is a case of the fictitious imagination, of dream castles, but is a synthetic imagining, not of images, but of real things, a real sweating Smith, in a real space and time, though it may be that the things as imagined never took place, and Smith may have sweated less than he imagines.

In the one case the so-called 'images,' then, are accompaniments of the process of remembering, and in the other they are the things as remembered. If in the former case you like to call the present facts which accompany memory, 'images,' it is of course possible to do so. It is, however, I think, misleading. If I walk down the street twice, I do not normally say that my second walk is a reproduction of the first, although it is of course possible to do so. When we talk of image, or picture, or reproduction, what we usually mean is reproduction in another stuff. Thus the post-card of the Matterhorn is a reproduction of it in different stuff. But for Smith to have his heart beat quickly again, or for him to feel anxious again, is not for Smith to reproduce his former experiences in a different stuff. His so-called 'images' now are of the same kind of stuff as formerly, namely, physiological and psychological. I do not see any

particularly good reason why Smith's heart beating again, or his faint anxieties, should be called images or reproductions.

The questions of erroneous, or hallucinatory, or of constructive imagination raise, of course, their own problems, which I do not now, as I said, propose to deal with at any length. For the present, although I believe that the objects of imagination are thought of as having, however fictitious they may be, a real place in a real world, I can only say that it seems to me an ultimate fact that thinking can go wrong, that it can suppose things in the real world to be arranged in ways in which real things never have been, and perhaps never could be, arranged. This sounds, of course, either very obvious, or else it sounds very paradoxical. In a later chapter I hope to express a little more precisely what I mean by these statements.

§ 7. General Concluding Remarks on Mr. Russell's Theory

(*a*) It will be seen at once that to reject images as existences makes Mr. Russell's theory of truth quite unacceptable. Even if his theory meant only that the truth of memory were *tested* by correspondence with what is perceived, it would fall invalid, because since there are no memory images, these cannot correspond with what is perceived. When I say, 'I am sure my pipe is lying on the table in the next room,' visualising the table with the pipe upon it, and then I go to see if I am right and find that I am, that cannot be a correspondence between a set of images which do not exist, and real things. But Mr. Russell is not concerned with a mere test of truth, he is attempt-

ing to describe its very nature. Truth for him *is* the correspondence of an image complex with a fact complex, and "images resemble what they mean," or "images are said to be 'copies of sensation.'"[1] Whatever 'sensation' means here, I do not know. But it looks on the surface as if it *ought* to mean 'perception.' As Mr. Russell here offers no further explanations, I assume that it does. The pipe example, then, will illustrate the nature of truth. But if this *is* truth, we must conclude that Mr. Russell's account of it is mistaken. It does not describe the truth of memory, and it leaves perception itself unaccounted for.

(β) This latter fact is itself important. If truth is correspondence with fact then it ought to be that in true perception we perceive images which copy realities, and that we do not perceive things at all. But if we think that this is so, we are falling into Locke's fallacy in its worst form, a fallacy which shows itself first in the common notion that we remember images. We should logically have to become agnostics. We would know nothing beyond our own states.

(γ) Mr. Russell, of course, gets over the difficulty (though not without grave inconsistency with the correspondence theory) by his peculiar doctrine of knowledge by acquaintance, to which I intend to refer later (Chapter VII., § 6). Direct perception is never in error (see *Philosophical Essays*, pp. 181-2, also *Problems of Philosophy*, chap. v.) and "any judgment derived from perception by mere analysis, must be true." But as to what truth means here, Mr. Russell leaves us completely in the dark.[2] And if we have hopes even that we have found an infallible test of

[1] *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, 1919, p. 22.

[2] See below, Chap. VII. § 6 (δ).

truth, they are dashed in the very next sentence. "This does not enable us, in any given case, to be quite certain that such and such a judgment is true, since we may inadvertently have failed merely to analyse what was given in perception." "Have failed to analyse it"—*truly*? But what is *truth*?

§ 8. Is Correspondence a Useless Concept?

(*a*) In concluding this long discussion, and before proceeding to treat of a very different kind of correspondence theory, it is as well to realise that there is a very real sense in which correspondence is a true account, if not of truth, at least of a test of truth. It is well worth while to enquire whether there must not be serious reasons why all men, plain men and philosophers alike, at any rate in their 'plainer' moments, have a dogged though not always a clear idea that to be true means to correspond with the facts. Ask any witness what he means to swear when he kisses the book, and he will, if he can answer at all, say something about telling or describing the facts.

The following, I think, is a useful and true account of what the correspondence test means. It cannot mean the copying of facts by images. It is, however, the correspondence between a *proposition* about, or a description of, what we see or think of when we image, and *another* proposition about, or description of, the things perceived, to which we refer. If preferred, we can say that if the identical proposition really describes the imaged event and the perceived event, then our imaging is true. Images cannot correspond with things, for one image cannot be to the left of another; it is words which are the

common denominators which enable experiences to be compared in any exact way. Imaging and perceiving both are directed to the real things, and it is the most obvious thing that the *description* of real things experienced in different ways should be compared.

It is obvious then, that correspondence, described thus, is an important test, not only in the case of memory, but in physical science. We describe what ought by hypothesis to happen, and we experiment to see if it does happen before our eyes. But it is equally obvious that correspondence does not describe the nature of truth, for it is notably common that what we are making the criterion of truth, namely perception, is itself subject to misinterpretation, error, hallucination.

CHAPTER VI

CRITICAL REALISM AND THE SENSE DATUM

§ 1. *Introduction.*

§ 2. *Statement of Critical Realism.*

§ 3. *Criticism.*—(α) Inconsistency between 'essences' as 'agreeing' and as 'identical with' characters of reality leads to disaster at the outset. (β) Effort of Critical Realism to rebut neo-realistic doctrine that we know existence, leads to separation of essence and existence. (γ) But Critical Realists 'sit on the fence.' The true 'datum' is the physical world itself, and what we are immediately conscious of is the content or objective or appearance. (δ) What we know in sense are not logical universals but particular qualities. (ε) If this is so, opposition between knowledge and 'intuition' breaks down. To oppose them is to deny that intuition is knowledge; this is the fiasco of Critical Realism. (ζ) Intuition is simply unanalysed direct knowledge of reality. (η) Uncertainty as to whether knowledge is direct or not, leads really to an agnostic 'copy theory.'

§ 4. *Critical Realism and the Datum.*—What *is* the Sense Datum? (α) Quotations illustrating inconsistencies. (β) My view of the datum as objectivity rather than immediate content. (γ) Critical Realism rejects common sense, but this is in fact truer, with strict modifications. (δ) The 'datum' (in the Critical Realist's sense) is neither physical, psychical, nor logical, but is an 'appearance,' a synthetic product or function. (ε) Summary of conditions affecting datum or content. (ζ) Mind is directly and continuously related to the physical object. (η) Appearances not entities 'like' what they represent. *Qua* 'like' they are the objects appearing undistorted. *Qua* 'unlike,' they are syntheses of such heterogeneous factors that comparison cannot be made. (θ) Images again. (ι) Plan.

§ 1

We now turn to one of the most recent views of knowledge, which is an important item in the history

of Realism. Although *Critical Realism*[1] was written partly as a polemic against Neo-Realism, it is by no means merely polemical. It contains a very carefully constructed and, on the whole, an admirably clearly-stated theory of knowledge. Although much of the writing is of necessity highly technical in character, one discovers a pleasant absence of the clanging 'jargon' which hampers the exposition of the earlier American writers on New Realism. The Critical Realists are, on the whole, less self-conscious than their earlier contemporaries about the terrible necessity for being 'scientific.'

Critical Realism is in the main a theory of the relation of knowledge to its objects, and not a theory of truth in the narrower, more exclusive, sense of the word, though one essay of the seven, that by Prof. A. K. Rogers, deals particularly with the problem of error. We have found in practice, however, that any isolation of the problem of truth from more general problems of knowledge is unhelpful. The theory of knowledge which Critical Realism puts forward will then be of the greatest importance for us.

§ 2. Statement of Critical Realism

As is to be expected in a co-operative study, there is, in the exposition of the positive doctrine of Critical Realism, a certain amount of repetition in statement as well as slight variation in points of view. The repetition is not without value; it gives the reader a

[1] The term 'Critical Realism' should not be confused with a doctrine which Prof. Dawes Hicks advocated in a paper entitled "The Basis of Critical Realism," *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, 1916–17. The 'Critical Realism' discussed below was first advocated in a volume, published in 1920, under the title *Essays in Critical Realism, A Co-operative Study in the Problems of Knowledge*, by seven American Professors, Drake, etc.

more stereoscopic view of the theory, and the variations are interesting, although agreement far outbalances difference.

Critical Realism distinguishes in the perceptual process three clearly-defined aspects. (It is as well to notice that Critical Realism's analysis of knowledge is mainly an analysis of perceptual knowledge.) In the first place, there is the physical existing object, describable in terms of physics. Do we, ask the Critical Realists, know that object directly? The answer to this question is in the negative. To say that the physical object is directly known makes it impossible, think the Critical Realists, to explain error. If the 'thing' is *given* to knowledge, given in its existence, there will be no room for that apparently subjective element which seems to give our knowledge the twist, as it were, which makes for error. When, in popular parlance, we say, seeing the stick apparently bent in the water, that 'the stick is bent,' then either we have to construct elaborate definitions and theories, as New Realism does, to show that the real stick really is in some way bent or that it is a perspective of the real world which we see; or we have, on the other hand to admit, think Critical Realists, that what we perceive directly is not the physical stick at all, but something else. This something else which is the direct given is called by Critical Realists the datum. This datum is to be clearly distinguished from the physical object on the one hand, and from psychical states on the other hand. The general point of view of Critical Realism is that the datum, being neither physical nor psychical, must be logical, "an entity of the peculiar type belonging to logic." The term most approved by the writers of this volume is that of "essence," the exposition of

which term is one of Prof. Santayana's important contributions to the subject. "By 'essence,'" says Prof. Santayana, "I understand a universal, of any degree of complexity of degree and definition, which may be given immediately, whether to sense or to thought. Only universals have logical or æsthetic individuality, or can be given directly, clearly, and all at once. . . . This object of pure sense or pure thought, with no belief superadded, an object inwardly complete and individual, but without external relations or physical status, is what I call an essence."[1] It will be seen that the non-temporal, non-spatial character of the essence makes it similar in some points to what we ourselves called, in discussing Mr. Russell's theory, the 'content' or 'objective' (not in Meinong's or Russell's sense). But we shall find reason to criticise the view that the 'essence' has a *logical* character. Sometimes instead of 'essence' Critical Realists call the datum 'character-complex,' or 'content,' or 'meaning.'

The third aspect of the knowledge process is the subjective aspect, the psychical idea. We have seen that the datum or essence is not a psychical state, though in the apprehension of it a psychical state is always present. A mental state exists in the knowing process, yet it is not the mental state which is known. The mental state is the very thing which enables us to know *what* is known, namely the datum or essence. The term 'vehicle' is on more than one occasion used, and serves to illustrate the directive character of the idea. There is not, as a matter of fact, complete unanimity between the various writers in the volume as to the exact relationship of psychical state and datum,

[1] *Essays in Critical Realism*, p. 168, footnote.

Professors Sellars, Lovejoy, and Pratt contending that the psychical state, because it has a determinative influence upon the character of the datum, enters into that character, the others holding that psychical state and datum are distinct, the latter being sometimes a compound of several factors variously combined. This difference need not, however, delay us.

The general relation between psychic state, datum, and object are of vital importance. We said at the outset that knowledge is not for Critical Realism a direct relation between mind and object. Knowledge, on the other hand, is a direct relation (though to call it a 'relation' is not properly to describe it) to the datum or essence, and this datum or essence is, both instinctively and reflectively, referred to the external world. Thus the datum is the means by which objects are known, or is, again, a 'vehicle' of knowledge, but is not itself identical with the object. The datum or essence thus comes between the object and the knower, but the Critical Realists are emphatic in their assertion that this does not mean that the knower is therefore cut off from the object, which would involve some kind of 'representative perception.' The datum or essence indeed is what mediates between the knower and the object, and this is possible just because the essence is the essence *of* the object. Prof. Sellars, both in this volume and in a later article in *Mind* (January 1922) makes use of the distinction between 'form' and 'matter.' Form and matter are not separable but distinguishable. Knowledge cannot in its very nature grasp the material objects in their existence. What it does is to apprehend their form or pattern, and this form or pattern is referred to the object of which it is (leaving for the moment truth and falsity out of account)

the pattern. Thus, though there is an essential distinction between the object of knowledge and the content of knowledge, the content of true knowledge is just what the thing is, nothing more nor less, though it is not the ' isness ' or existence of the thing.

Critical Realism stands for epistemological, but not necessarily metaphysical dualism. Indeed Critical Realism is content to leave metaphysical questions well alone, believing that they are entirely separable from problems of epistemology. The term ' dualism ' must, it is true, be used carefully, owing, among other things, to the slight difference of opinion in the status of the datum already referred to. " Critics of our view are asked," says Prof. Drake (in a footnote, p. 4), . . . " not to label us simply as ' dualists,' but to recognise precisely what sort of duality we do and do not admit." But it will be sufficiently accurate if we take Prof. Sellars' account of the matter (see pp. 190, 193). Epistemological dualism is opposed to the epistemological monism of Neo-Realism, for whom the presented datum is the ultimate reality. Epistemological dualism is simply the doctrine we have been expounding, namely that the " knowledge of objects is mediated by ideas which are *in some sense* distinct from the objects of knowledge." [1] This leads to a distinction of which some of the Critical Realists make much, namely that between *knowledge* and *intuition*. " We shall point out that we claim, from the first, to *know* physical objects, and that we admit, as a result of reflection, that we *intuit* only contents." [2] " The physical realm is one that we can never intuit, as common sense tends to suppose ; the only realm we can intuit is the realm of data." [3]

[1] *Essays in Critical Realism*, p. 190. [2] *Ibid.* p. 193. [3] *Ibid.* p. 195.

§ 3. Criticism of Critical Realism

(*a*) One might begin one's criticism of Critical Realism at many points, work through and round the theory, and return to the same point again. I shall plunge in by quoting Prof. Rogers' account of truth and error. He says . . . " as truth is the identity of this essence with the actual character of the reality referred to, so error stands for lack of such agreement, and the ascribing of an ideal character to what we are mistaken in supposing to be real, or the ascribing to a reality of a wrong character instead of a right one." [1]

I would point out in the first place a subtle change half way through the passage in the use of terminology, which, although it may appear slight in itself, seems to me to reveal one of the cracks upon the surface of Critical Realism, which, as we explore it, brings us upon chasms so vast that the whole solid system hangs in imminent danger of disintegration. The discrepancy I refer to is the use of the word ' identity ' in describing truth in the first half, and ' lack of such *agreement* ' in describing error in the second half of the statement. In the first case the *essence* is identical with the *actual character* of the object, in the second case the two do not *agree*. Now we cannot both eat our cake and have it. Either,—if the essence is, in any case whatsoever, literally identical with, that is to say, numerically and otherwise the same as, the character which is an inseparable character of the thing,—it follows that we know directly an existing real thing having characters. Or, on the other hand, if essence, in any case whatsoever, only ' agrees,' and is not identical, with the character of a real thing, it follows that we do not

[1] *Essays in Critical Realism*, p. 117.

know even the character or essence of a real thing. If the reply is "yes, but we distinguish between 'knowledge' in truth, and 'knowledge' in falsity; in truth the essence *is* the essence of the object, in falsity we know something else which we *take* to be the essence of the object, but which really is not," I reply that it is unsatisfactory to have two theories of knowledge, one for truth and one for falsity. And if the answer is again that there are not two theories, but that the theory of true knowledge describes knowledge, and the theory of false knowledge describes what is simply not knowledge, then I answer that, as even false propositions have some ground in positive reality, so are they knowledge, in the generic sense, of characters of that reality, and not of mere 'essences' hanging somewhere in mid air. Or if they are the latter, then all knowledge is of essences hanging somewhere in mid air, essences which cannot possibly be 'identical' with actual characters of objects, but can only in some unknown manner copy or represent these. In which case we are committed to the worst excesses of representative perception.

This is one way of attacking the problem. Let us approach it again from a different quarter.

(β) Critical Realism is, as we said, a polemic against Neo-Realism, amongst other theories. This is one of the reasons why it insists so strongly that objects are not 'given' in their existence. Neo-Realism is inclined to say, as we saw, that the mind is 'out there' in space among its objects, or conversely (it does not seem to me to matter very greatly) that objects get bodily inside the mind. Critical Realism is earnest in countering what it regards as this objectionable doctrine, and it does this by asserting that the essence

or character of objects is given, and not their existence. For example, "how," asks Prof. Rogers,[1] "are we going to render plausible the claim that when I remember a past object, the object is there bodily and identical with the memory? . . . I have, on the contrary, been assuming that we naturally make a clear distinction between the characters of things as embodied in meanings which we attribute to them, and the real existence of these characters in the things themselves." Again, Prof. Sellars insists that "The objects themselves *i.e.* those bits of *existence*, do not get within our consciousness."[2] Now some of this, as a polemic against New Realism may, if phrases like 'within our consciousness' are defined, and if the arguments are not pressed too far, be quite true. But in the application of it the Critical Realists do go, as it seems to me, a step too far. They say that we do not directly know the existing thing, but only its essence. Yet is not the negative part of this statement equivalent to a denial of all knowledge? Must we not rather hold that we know literally and directly, if sometimes imperfectly and in a modified way (the directness of knowledge is not negated because it takes place through a medium and by means of mechanisms) the existing object itself? The Critical Realists are so uncertain on this point that it is difficult to pin them down. They assert that the essence is the essence of the object, that it is the form of formed matter, that we can only know the form of matter, but that to know form *is* to know matter, since form and matter are one. But then the Critical Realists go on to talk about existence never being 'given.' What, in the name of heaven, *is* 'given' when I perceive this writing-desk, but the *existing* writing-desk

[1] *Essays in Critical Realism*, pp. 130-31. [2] *Ibid.* p. 24.

itself? Note that I do not say 'its existence is given.' That to me is meaningless, because existence cannot be borne away from essence (admitted of course, by the opponent). It is the existing thing with its qualities which is given. In the case of past events matters are not substantially different, although the metaphorical term 'given' is not so appropriate. When we think of the past the object of thought is not 'given' or 'presented' or 'thrown' at us, as it were, in the way in which it appears to be in perception. Yet it is the thing, in its essence and existence which, although it is in the past, is the direct object of our thought. In this plain sense, the existence even of the past object is given.

(γ) This, however, to Critical Realism, is heresy. The *reference* is to the object, but it is the essence and not the object which is given. The essence is in all cases *taken* as belonging to the actual event. In the case of truth it does belong to the event, in the case of error it does not. I have already criticised this point of view. It should appear plain by now that we must decide once and for all whether we do or do not have as the direct object of knowledge in sense perception the physical object. You cannot sit on the fence here, and this, it appears to me, is just what Critical Realism is, in effect anyhow, doing. The object to be known, the 'it,' if you like, is, whether now or a little later, whether directly or indirectly, either to be known in and for itself, or else it is not. If in any sense at all it *is* to be known, then it is what is *given* to be known. It is the very object itself, and not a mere essence or character or anything else of the sort, which is the *given*, or the true datum. If this is not so, then I do not see how Critical Realism can escape dualism in

the bad sense, that is to say, agnosticism. I hope to defend my own usage, which, although not unique, is rather an unorthodox, and it may at first appear, perverse, use of the term ' datum.' The sense datum, I hold, is the real existing object, or, if we desire to be very strict indeed, we may say it is the objective physical world, a portion of which is presented. The true datum is not what we are immediately conscious of, I should call this variously, and in slightly different contexts, the ' content,' or (as when discussing judgments of perception in Russell's theory) the ' objective,' or simply ' appearance.'

(δ) The Critical Realists' separation between essence and existence (and it is, I think, in spite of protests, a real separation) is shown in the fact that Critical Realists do not, generally speaking, predicate existence of essence. Essences are, *per se*, not physical or psychical existences, but universals, characters, logical entities. I hope to discuss a little more fully the nature and status of Universals; in the meantime I would state that it seems to me to confuse matters to say that the characters of existing things are universals. The character of this apple is to be red and hard and roughly spherical. These characters are not universals at all, they are particular existing facts and not a scrap ' logical.' And when I know the red, hard, roughly spherical apple, *what* I know is a complex of particulars, or, if preferred, a whole in its particularised existing differences. The case is wholly altered when I begin to make propositions about the apple, or when I begin to think of the relation of its qualities to the classes to which they belong. When I say, ' the apple is red,' the use of the term red means that I am pronouncing this particular apple to be

possessed of a particular quality which is a specific instance of the class or universal 'redness.' Redness, we are accustomed to say, does not exist, but subsists. Red, on the other hand, used in the concrete sense in which it cannot possibly mean 'redness' is an existent adjective[1] of an existent thing. It is this distinction between an actual existing quality of and *in* a concrete thing, and the universals which are always involved whenever we make a proposition, that Critical Realists do not make when they call the characters of things *logical* entities. We may *think* of universals, which are, as I hope to show later (Chap. VIII. § 3 (δ)) by referring to a paper of Prof. Stout's, 'distributive unities'; but what we *perceive* when apples are in question are not universals but qualities in a pleasant complex which common sense takes to be in the apple. I am not now discussing whether common sense is right or wrong. Whatever or wherever secondary qualities are, they are particulars, and *not* logical universals.

(ε) But if this is so, it will lead us to a vastly different account of knowledge from that which Critical Realism presents. For one thing, it breaks down the artificial distinction which Critical Realism makes between the object of knowledge and the object of intuition. It is of course valuable and essential to distinguish intuition from *judgment* as a *mode* of knowledge. (I suppose 'intuition' for Critical Realists just means 'sense knowledge'; I cannot remember any passage where they exactly define it, though I may be mistaken.) But if intuition is a distinguishable *mode* of knowledge, is it, I ask, sound

[1] Mr. W. E. Johnson (*Logic*, i. p. 9) distinguishes usefully between adjectives and adjective-words, substantives and substantive-words, etc.

to oppose 'intuition' to knowledge, to say, as the Critical Realists constantly do,[1] that intuition is *different* from knowledge? I cannot think that it is. Moreover, this is not a mere question of terms. In contending that, whilst we know physical objects, we intuit only contents, Critical Realism implies that the intuition of contents or essences is not knowledge at all. True, it says "the world we *affirm* can only be known in terms of the characters given in experience."[2] But we have seen that Critical Realism cannot maintain consistently that these characters are the real characters or qualities attached or belonging to things. Intuition of contents or 'essences,' then, is not knowledge at all, and moreover, if that is not knowledge, all knowledge of objects is, for Critical Realism, for ever impossible. This is the disaster to which I think Critical Realism really leads.

(ζ) The relation of 'intuition' to 'knowledge' is surely otherwise. It is the relation of species to genus. When we say that intuition is knowledge, direct knowledge of the real, we do not imply that it is complete adequate knowledge, or that the directly experienced content of sense knowledge is either beyond error or is complete self-sustaining knowledge. Far from that, it is knowledge which must be criticised, experimented with, correlated with other knowledge of all kinds by the tried methods of science. "Things are not what they seem," particularly so (I should contend) as regards secondary qualities, and we attribute to the object out there qualities which, although real enough in their own way, are the effects of psychological, physiological, and physical processes, which in the nature of things are shut off from the

[1] *E.g.*, *Essays in Critical Realism*, p. 197 and p. 212. [2] *Ibid.* p. 195.

view of the perceiving agent. Nevertheless perceptual knowledge, with the judgments arising immediately therefrom, is still knowledge, though of an imperfect kind ; it is indeed the raw material out of which more systematic and therefore truer knowledge is made. In this sense, and this sense only, is Critical Realism right when it says " the world we *affirm* can only be known in terms of the characters given in experience." But it is because Critical Realism does not mean this that it is wrong. The characters ' given ' are not, as Critical Realists think, universals which are reflectively assigned to reality in somewhat different ways than they are assigned instinctively. They are qualities, taken unreflectively as simple, because as experienced they *are* simple qualities, discovered on scientific analysis often to be of exceedingly complex origin, being affected as they are sometimes by elements physiological and psychical : they emanate, however, from real physical things and are located by the percipient in them. The world we affirm is the world existing here and now with which we are in direct contact. Though the content of intuition may be restricted and imperfect knowledge, it is nevertheless this same real existing world which we (not simply refer to, but) intuit here and now.

(η) There is what seems to me a curious wobbling on the question as to whether we know the real world directly or not.[1] The Critical Realist is anxious to maintain that we do have real knowledge of real objects, and at the same time to show that this real knowledge cannot be of the existing objects *in se*, but only of their ' essences.' They attempt to reconcile matters by saying it is the essence of the

[1] *E.g.*, *Essays in Critical Realism*, bottom of p. 217 and top of p. 218.

object, but we have already shown how inconsistent this is. One can see the same desperate 'wobble' in Prof. Sellars's Essay, from which I have quoted. Prof. Sellars says: "I open my eyes and perceive concrete *things*. What are concrete things? *They are not merely character-complexes*. They are co-reals to be adjusted to, independent, common, and full of various capacities."[1] Compare this with what the same writer says below on the same page, "It is pretty clear, then, that there are two elements in perception: *the affirmation of a co-real and the assigned set of characters or aspects*. Suppose we call these, respectively, the object of perception and the content of perception. The content is intuited; the object is reacted to and affirmed." The loss of delicious *naïveté* in the second quotation is plain. Why not keep the *naïveté* and say simply that it is *things* which we intuit (which is not to say that the true *content* of intuition is a thing) *and* react to. How can you react to an object except as (partially it may be) revealed in its content, or how can you intuit its content without reacting to it as an independent co-real? And if it is agreed that these things go together it must be admitted that intuition is directly of an existing object, not of a content distinct from an object.

Let us take one more example. On p. 198 Prof. Sellars says: "After due selection and supplementation, the judged idea is accepted as revealing the object," and again: "The content in terms of which we think the object must have the property of reproducing the character of the object in some measure." Once again we enquire, does knowledge *reveal* by *repro-*

[1] *Essays in Critical Realism*, p. 196.

ducing? When Prof. Sellars finally gives away his Critical Realism by saying (p. 216): "I can see no objection to a critical copy theory in the case of memory. The content can be *like* its object. We try to reproduce our past experiences in a more or less selective and schematic fashion in memory," is he not committing himself to the complete agnosticism which he is so anxious to attribute to the theory that intuition is of the physical thing?[1] Critical Realism is exceedingly anxious to avoid the fallacy of representative perception,[2] and it does so by vainly trying to re-attach the divorced 'essence' to its object. But, although it calls itself Realism and anxiously desires to be such, it has, in my view at least, completely failed to maintain the first fundamental requirement of Realism, namely, that knowledge—of all kinds—means direct contact of knower with existing objects. Nor is to say 'direct contact' to deny the existence of processes of perception, and *media* in and through which these processes work.

§ 4. Critical Realism and the Datum: What *is* the Sense Datum?

(*a*) It will be necessary now to examine a little more closely the nature of sense data and their relation to physical objects. Let us first observe some rather varying statements regarding this. Prof. Drake (pp. 19-20) says: "Our data are not actual portions, or selected aspects, of the objects perceived. They are character complexes . . ." etc. After going on to say that in so far as perception is veridical these char-

[1] See *Essays in Critical Realism*, p. 197.
[2] Cf. *ibid.*, especially Prof. Strong, p. 241.

acters belong to the objects, he adds, " our perceptual data are at best only in part genuine aspects of outer reality." We have here the old confusion. Data are *not* (I presume this means never) aspects of the objects perceived, and yet they *are* ' in part genuine aspects.' Another difference, before alluded to, and acknowledged by the writers, is seen clearly if we compare Prof. Drake's " But neither now, are the essences that appear in perception my mental states " [1] with Prof. Sellars's " Are these data non-mental? Or are they mental? . . . The Critical Realist agrees with the idealist that the content [= datum] is mental, but strikes a counter-blow by asserting that knowledge is a claim to know an object in terms of this content." [2] Once again, in Prof. Pratt's Essay, we find a view put forward which he shares with Prof. Strong [3] and others that the datum is the same as *meaning* (p. 90). Personally I should have thought that if the datum were the immediate given, it would have had to discover its meaning in something beyond itself. With these remarks, let us now turn to serious discussion.

(β) I alluded before to the fact that for me the datum is distinct from the content and is in fact the objective world itself. This is a line of thought which Prof. Dawes Hicks frequently advocates.[4] I should say that it was on the whole safer to talk of *the* ' Datum ' (including all that may be given for knowledge, as well as what actually is), objectivity itself, than of ' data,' because, although the real objective world no doubt divides itself into parts and classes (*e.g.* molecules and atoms) and in that sense is a many, to which the plural term ' data ' would properly apply, yet that plurality is

[1] *Essays in Critical Realism*, p. 20. [2] *Ibid.* p. 217. [3] *Ibid.* p. 235.
[4] *E.g.*, *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, 1920–21, p. 152.

not always known in perception, and the things which we call objects are not *necessarily* distinct or isolable entities, though of course our division of reality may be, in part, at least, veridical. The given in perception is an enormously complex system following its own laws. Our agency upon that given is in large part selective, the selection being both physiological and psychological or teleological.

My reasons for taking this, and not, as is usual, the immediate given, as the datum, is that it appears to me essential for a Realism which is to be true. The immediate content is, it seems to me, the resultant of a very complex interaction between factors physical, physiological, psychical, and when we talk of the *given* it is more natural to suppose that we mean the objective world, as it really is in its existence, and not as perception may mistakenly interpret it. When I perceive a particular portion of the objective world, which portion I may call an 'object,' *e.g.* this writing-desk regarded simply as a physical object, what is given to me *for* perception (as opposed to the content consciously apprehended *in* perception, which content is an interpretation of the real) is the real desk which is in its physical nature a particular grouping of molecules. That is what I mean by the given, the objective, which is immediately apprehended in portions ; it is this which I am perceiving or thinking about. Of course it is true, on the other hand, that anything can be the direct object of thought, and in this sense it is possible to regard the immediate content, or again the psycho-physio-physical factors themselves, as the given problematic object. But though scientific *thought* may be turned on these things, perception has the physical as its object, and it is perception with which we are

mainly concerned, since " perception is crucial for the theory of knowledge." For me, then, the sense datum, here and now, is a part of the physical objective world.

(γ) It is not, however, the sense datum in this sense, but in the Critical Realists' sense, which we must discuss. ' Datum ' for the Critical Realist means content, essence, character, and it is the relation of this to the physical world (my ' datum ') which requires investigation. Let us enquire, then, waiving criticisms as to terminology, what is the nature of the datum *or* content.

The position of common sense is stated on p. 210 to be rejected. Prof. Sellars says : " Coming back to the outlook of common sense, we find that primary knowledge tends to be conceived as an intuition of the physical thing itself. We see aspects of physical things, their qualities and surfaces. Then, perhaps, we say that we see the way the thing *appears* under certain conditions and positions. . . . All this is, of course, a sort of compromise within naïve realism. . . ." Critical Realism, on the other hand, gives up the sensible physical thing. We intuit essences, and not existing physical things.

With important reservations, the position, if not of common sense, that of common sense elaborately reinforced by scientific knowledge, is, I think, substantially truer than that of Critical Realism. Taking into consideration the fact that things are in space and time, and that therefore they are seen in perspective, that they appear through a medium, and in an environment which may modify their appearance, that our sense organs are tuned to respond to certain kinds and periods of vibrations (such as those of ' light ' and ' sound ') and not to others, that in being sensed

quantities appear as qualified, that out of the continuum of qualities thus made by the influence of sense upon the physical (or if preferred, *vice versa*) developing consciousness both discovers and ' makes ' new wholes —taking into account these general and many other factors too numerous to mention—it is true that " we see aspects of physical things, their qualities and surfaces." These reservations, of course, make enormous differences to the naïve view of common sense. Things are not, particularly as regards secondary qualities, partly as regards many of the perspectives of spatial objects, what they seem to be, anyhow to perception. The content is clearly to be distinguished from the object.

This is, of course, just the kind of thing which Critical Realism means when it distinguishes intuition of content from knowledge of objects. We cannot intuit the object in the sense that we cannot in mere perception discern certainly the character of the isolated physical object in itself. We perceive the physical, *as-perceived-through-a-medium-in-an-environment*, and it is the conditions symbolised by italics which make the content of intuition necessarily different from the content of complete scientific knowledge. The reason is simply this. Perception directs and restricts itself to, is interested practically, not theoretically, in a particular physical group of existents, and has as its immediate content qualities (which are really the resultants of complex interactions) which it imputes to the object, which it *throws* at the object, as it were. Because of this uncritical practical attitude of imputing everything to the isolated physical object in which it is interested, and nothing to environment, media, perceptual conditions, etc., perception when it

becomes self-conscious and turns theorist, gets a wholly erroneous view of the physical world. Science, on the other hand, is able to give a truer account of the physical reality of the objects we perceive, just because it knows and realises all the complicated factors in the situation, and is able to make allowance for the mutual influence of these and other wider factors. The content, then, of scientific knowledge, being a view of physical reality from a much wider standpoint, is necessarily a truer view of the situation than is the content of perception. But Critical Realism, although, in this sense only, justified in saying that the physical object is not intuited directly, is really overstating its case. The physical object is intuited directly, that is to say that we intuit real physical things, not mere essences, but our intuition is not full or true or adequate, being affected by other factors, physical and otherwise, than those of the object which direct perception takes into account.

(δ) The datum or content of sense is then truly a synthetic product, although the elements in the synthesis are not themselves directly perceivable. We said earlier that it is not in space or time, and that it is neither physical nor psychical. Now we may add, referring to our analysis[1] of the apple case, that it is not a logical universal. What to call it I have no idea whatsoever, unless it be the transferred epithet 'epistemological.' Call it, if you please, an appearance or phenomenon, but throw at that term in its present usage no arrows of tradition, for they are not made to wound this particular Achilles. To say that the content or datum is not temporal or spatial or physical or psychical or logical is not to be

[1] See § 3 (δ).

an agnostic. Particularly it is not agnostic to call it non-physical.

It is not agnostic to call the content non-physical, because the content is, not a detached essence, but the physical-as-appearing. In perception we are in direct contact with the physical, and it is the physical which appears to us, subject to the complex conditions accompanying appearance to a mind. Nevertheless just because of this, the content, or appearance, implying these conditions, cannot possibly be physical simply. Although I am obliged to use the term 'content' or 'appearance,' I do so acutely conscious of the pitfalls of such usage. It is truer, I think, to regard the appearance simply as the function of a complex process; taken by itself it is an abstraction. That is one reason why the term 'appearance,' with all its historical disadvantages, is probably better than 'content,' which seems to imply that what is immediately before the mind is something complete, a self-contained entity. For perceptual, which are practical purposes, it is no doubt true that blue carpets and fawn-coloured chairs are solid enough entities: for epistemology an appearance or content is a very problematic 'somewhat' indeed; it is anything but (if I may make a poor but illustrative pun) 'contented' or 'self-contained.' A content is about as solid and self-contained an entity as the flash of an explosion. It might be compared to the spark of flint against steel. It is the emergent when matter hits mind. It is just because the term 'appearance' involves, if you think of it, both a thing which appears, and a person to whom it appears, that it is a better term than 'content.' The material and mental (and physiological) components may mix in varying proportions, sometimes the latter predominat-

ing, as when in delirium tremens a man sees green snakes, sometimes the former, as when you perceive a triangular shape. Always, of course, in external perception, whatever the proportions actually are, in delirium tremens as in studying geometry, unreflective perception attributes everything to the external world and nothing to its own processes. Critical Realism is sound when it urges this.

(ε) Summing up briefly the elements which together produce the sense content, we may say (*a*) there is the existing physical world of molecules and atoms and electrons which science describes,[1] but which, owing to the limitation of our sense organs which select the raw materials of fuller knowledge, may be infinitely more complex than science can ever know. (*b*) The sense organs, tuned to receive certain of the objective physical vibrations, but not others, make out of these, how, we do not know, sensations. These, at the lower stages of life, are not distinct but fused together, forming what Ward calls the ' presentational continuum.' This continuum must vary slightly with each individual owing to variations in sensitivity, etc., of the sense organs. Thirdly (*c*) there is the process of purposive selection by the organism, which develops, in the civilised human adult, to a high degree of self-con-

[1] I am well aware that Prof. Whitehead protests against the ' bifurcation ' of Nature (*e.g. Concept of Nature*, chap. ii.) into primary and secondary qualities, and against any view of the latter as ' psychic additions.' I can only say here that I am (at present at least) unable to follow him. I agree that the ' naïve ' instinctive view is simpler to work with, but I cannot get over the difficulty that it seems to contradict itself. It is impossible, it seems to me, to keep ' psychic additions ' out of it. I may be wrong to assume, as I have had to do here, that secondaries do not belong independently to physical objects. But even if they do, I cannot (for the present at least, although I admit I should like to) see how we could *know* it. Colours, *e.g.* can only be intuited privately by you or by me : we have no common measure of comparison, as we have with universally definable motions, shapes, etc. If secondary qualities are ' real,' however, this will not seriously affect our general view of the sense datum.

sciousness. This selection discovers the ' things ' and ' objects ' of which we talk in everyday life. It goes too far probably to say that the division and kinds which we ' discover ' in the world are determined solely by our individual or even by our racial interests, although it is certain that through interest we constantly isolate and draw boundaries where there are none.[1] There are, without doubt, real divisions ranging from the outlines or boundaries of objects in space to the greater and smaller orders of nature. This, however, is at the moment irrelevant.

(ζ) This view of things is of course familiar. But it is not frequently enough realised that the process of a mind (influenced, as a member of humankind, by human necessities, biassed individually by the accidents and fortunes of circumstance) *going out to perceive a portion of the physical objective world which science imperfectly describes*, is a continuous process, beginning with a mental act and terminating at the physical world, *and stopping nowhere between*. Because the immediate content of our perception is not vibrations but solid coloured tables and chairs that sound when you thump them, philosophers are far too ready to conclude that *what* we perceive are contents or data, solid, coloured, resonant. Your philosopher appeals to good common sense at this point: he says, " Do not tell me that what I am now perceiving is vibrations, it is a good solid wooden table that thumps. To call it anything else is simply to falsify the facts." But go further and ask him *what* the physical table he thumps really is, and he must admit, unless he is a very ignorant philosopher indeed, that tables are not all they seem to be, though

[1] See on this " The Common-sense Conception of a Material Thing," G. F. Stout, *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, 1900–1901. Also above, Chap. II. § 3 (η).

they may be resistant, etc., and it is likely that they are extended in space. I take it on the eminent authority of Prof. Broad that it is probable that physical objects have shape.[1]

(η) Nevertheless, when we say that a table appearing extended in space is so far appearing as it is, it is absolutely vital that we should make it clear also that it is not the appearance of the table which is extended, but that it is the table which appears extended. An appearance or a content cannot possibly be extended, just because it is the *appearing* of an object modified by complex conditions. An appearance or content is, we said before, not in time or space, in mind or out of it, is not logical, just because it is a function of mind acting upon object stimulating mind. A thing may appear in one respect almost exactly as it is, *e.g.* as when we look down from above on an equilateral triangle and judge that the angles are equal. In this, although the perceiving mind is present, the processes of perception modify the content scarcely at all, whilst the position in space of the eye, just above the drawn triangle, secures that the spatial medium itself shall not appreciably modify the content. The refractive influence of the air is again negligible. If, on the other hand, we take the case of colour, the organism plays a very important part in transforming the physical material so that secondary quality is produced. In these two cases there is the greatest temptation to compare the ' appearance ' with the scientifically described object. We tend always to say that the appearance of the perceived triangle is *like* the real triangle, or that the appearance of the red apple is *unlike* the physical reality. But an appearance, being non-spatial, non-

[1] See *Mind*, October 1921, p. 396.

physical, etc., cannot possibly be *like* anything physical. In the first place, it is not that the appearance of the triangle is spatially like the appearance of the real triangle, but that the real spatial triangle appears directly and is in detail practically unmodified. In the second case the sensed rosy appearance of the apple is only 'unlike' the real apple in the analogous sense that virtue is unlike a red rosy apple. They are of totally different orders (although I have been unable to give to the order of appearance a satisfactory name). The content or appearance is neither here, there, nor anywhere, and is like nothing in heaven or earth but itself and other similar appearances. So that when I say, 'Tables are not all they seem to be, except extended in space, etc.,' I do not mean merely, in a rough empirical sense, that the appearance of a table is unlike the scientifically described reality. I mean that, *qua* 'like' (*e.g. qua* extended), it is the real existing table which appears as it is, and that, *qua* 'unlike' (*e.g. qua* secondary qualities), the real table is modified by factors outside itself, producing a disturbed or modified 'appearance,' which, being a synthetic product of heterogeneous (including mental) factors, is not properly comparable with a simple physical existent at all.

(*θ*) My criticism of the datum in Critical Realism has led me to expound partially a positive theory which I think must be opposed to it. There we may leave, for the present, Critical Realism. Before closing this section I may remark that the same objections which we found in our last chapter to hold good regarding 'images' will apply here. Prof. Strong, for example, says (p. 238) the "mental image alone is a present fact, an existence." It is this mental image by means

of which we conceive the idea or essence, which is, he insists, once more, in the case of memory a mere character *without* its existence. The mental image, I should urge, here and elsewhere, is neither fact nor existence, but my view of the past itself.

(*i*) As the subject of the sense datum is so vital for the theory of knowledge, and is so very much discussed to-day, I make no apology for exploring it a little further. I intend now to examine certain aspects of the views of some present-day philosophers on this subject. I shall attempt to make no exhaustive survey or criticism, my aim being simply to select and examine what seem to me to be certain salient features in the controversy, in order to see whether a constructive theory such as I have outlined can possibly stand.

CHAPTER VII

THE SENSE DATUM—*continued*

§ 1. *Introduction.*—(α) The usual assumption of data as simple entities. Examples. (β) Problem defined. (γ) Terminology. (δ) Broad on 'sensible appearance.'

§ 2. *Dr. Moore on Judgments of Perception.*—(α) Statement. (β) Criticism. Identification of datum with, *e.g.*, surface of inkstand makes error impossible. Sense datum is, on the contrary, an interpretation. We judge about facts, not data. (γ) In the 'tree' example it is the *tree*, not the *datum* (or content), which *seems* smaller. If this is so, Moore's view destroys itself.

§ 3. *Have 'visual sense data' size?*—(α) Difficulties in maintaining they have not. (β) 'Visual size' means commonly, imaginary projection upon an arbitrarily placed imaginary plane, but this affords no basis for measurement. (γ) The translation of three dimensions into two in 'pure vision' is not projection on a plane, but simply the way the eye sees real things. The 'plane' is an invention of artists and philosophers. (δ) This being so, only real things *appear* bigger or smaller, and it is misleading to say appearances or data *are* bigger or smaller. Only sophisticated persons and abstract thinkers make this mistake. Appearances or data are not entities. If we recognise this, many contemporary problems appear artificial. (ε) Hicks quoted.

§ 4. *Prof. Hicks' view of sense content.*—(α) Statement. (β) Advantage of this view is that it takes knowledge concretely, act with object, so that neither sensum nor 'act' are self-contained entities.

§ 5. *Prof. Broad's view discussed.*—(α) Three reasons why sensa thought to be mental, rejected. (1) That they are private. Broad says this might be dependent on physiological conditions. But, we may ask, what do we know of these? And do they explain all? (2) That sensa can be arranged in a continuous series, some of which seem unquestionably mental, and therefore the others. Broad distinguishes between bodily feelings and genuine sensations. I reply that this is artificial because both are cognitive, not of datum, but of objective world. (3) That sensa resemble images. Broad says images may depend on bodies, not on minds. Yet even

supposing this, may they not be equally 'mental'? (β) Ways of describing the relation of sensa to objects. (γ) The 'selective' theory must be rejected, because, as we saw, sensa are products of heterogeneous factors, and not physical or 'ready-made.' (δ) Broad rejects, we must accept, some form of the 'creative theory,' sensa being products, not of body and objects, but of mind-and-body and objects. 'Creation-out-of-nothing' criticism refuted, for sensa not entities. (ε) Russell's view of the external world as construction of data, untenable. Laird cited.

§ 6. *Knowledge by acquaintance.*—(α) Our view of knowledge of the datum will be radically different from that of contemporary thinkers who regard datum as simply entity directly known. (β) Even to say datum is continuum not satisfactory, for continuum is affected by selection of sense organs. To take datum as simple, and to say we *know* perfectly by acquaintance, is to substitute crude perceptual common sense for philosophy. (γ) The 'given' or datum is simply for serious scientific thought a problematic somewhat. (δ) Russell's account of 'knowledge by acquaintance' criticised. (ε) But, though there is no 'knowledge by acquaintance,' it does not follow that all knowledge is by description, which involves words. Hicks' view that discrimination always present, which issues in verbal judgment. I should agree on the whole. (ζ) Both sense datum, then, and 'knowledge by acquaintance,' are, epistemologically, abstractions.

§ 1

(α) The most dangerous thing about the immediate content or sense datum (as the term is usually accepted) is that it appears to be so simple. The sense datum is given, here and now, it seems: it is the only thing which appears to be so given, and therefore we conclude that all sophisticated scientific knowledge must be simply a use and a manipulation and a criticism of these materials so given. We can never directly transcend what comes to us through our 'five' senses; we can only turn these senses upon as many aspects of the external world as possible, and through correlation and comparison gain a knowledge of the mutual interaction of the phenomena. Such knowledge enables us to allow for causal modifications, and so gain a clearer conception of things as they are in themselves.

All this is of course in a way indubitably true. I cannot get 'outside' my senses, and any theory of knowledge which hopes that I can, is sure to end in agnosticism, implicit or explicit. In itself, then, the emphasis on the sense datum is not wrong, but is the only sound way of regarding knowledge. What really is wrong, I think, is a theory which has grown up, very largely unconsciously, in the minds of present-day philosophers as to the nature of the sense datum. No one denies that a round penny appears immediately to be hard, resonant, brown, and if seen from certain angles, appears elliptical, and that this content is what appears to be immediately 'given.' What is far more doubtful is the habit of mind which regards the hard, brown, elliptical *content* as an entity, as a thing, or kind of existence. Yet this is what philosophers are constantly doing. Because a penny appears to be elliptical, they at once assume that there is an elliptical object, out there in space, and some of them very seriously indeed set themselves the problem of finding out how an elliptical penny can occupy the 'same' space as a round penny. Others, again, assume that sense data are actually parts of the physical objects which we perceive. We shall in a moment select examples of this kind of theory. Here let me quote one or two sentences showing how sense data, or (in my usage) contents, or appearances, are regarded as such isolable entities or objects that it is supposed that physical things can be defined in terms of them. Note that it is a very different thing to know the physical world through sense data (the only possible way) and, on the other hand, to define it in terms of them.

Mr. C. D. Broad, criticising[1] Mr. Russell's *Our*

[1] *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, 1914–15, article "Phenomenalism," p. 227.

Knowledge of the External World, says: "We must be perfectly clear as to the distinction between sensations, sense data, and physical objects; for it is largely on the question whether and in what sense it is necessary to assume the existence of separate *entities* [italics mine] corresponding to each of these terms that Phenomenalism distinguishes itself from other views." Mr. Russell's theory of the external world is, of course, a far-reaching and elaborate attempt to define physical objects in terms of sense data. Later, Broad says: "There would clearly be a very great advantage if we could somehow define a physical object in terms of sense data." Again, Prof. Nunn says:[1] "By calling a half-crown . . . 'really circular,' I mean that it would appear circular if held in any one of a certain specifiable series of positions. (This statement is capable of expansion in terms of sense data.)"

(β) What, then, is the common view as to the nature of the sense datum? That question has two sides, one of which refers to its immediate perceivable nature, the other to its genesis. As I have said, the answer to the first half of the question is usually taken to be obvious, whilst the second half, which I have in part tried in the last chapter to answer, scarcely receives sufficient attention, because sense data, being immediate, are taken for granted, for what they are, as patches of colour, and so on. I do not mean that there is not a great deal of discussion as to whether data are mental or physical, and as to their relation to the mental and the physical. But I do mean that the habit of regarding them as somehow ultimate, as entities, the habit of mind which I have illustrated by quotations, goes very deep indeed, and the question as to whether the

[1] *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, 1915–16, p. 165.

immediate given content may not be something very different in its true nature from what it appears to be, is often not considered seriously at all. Common sense asserts that the patch of colour is really 'there,' the most obvious and real thing in the world. Philosophy scarcely stops to enquire *what* the patch is, whether the patch which is obviously there is really *there* or anywhere at all, or whether it is even *now*.

(γ) Prof. Broad, in an article "The External World" (*Mind*, October 1921), gives an interesting critical account of the sense datum and its relation to the external world. Prof. Broad, in company with Prof. Stout and some other contemporary philosophers, prefers the term 'sensum' to that of 'sense datum.' Prof. Stout criticises the use of the term 'sense datum' in the following words:[1] "... This is a question-begging word. It suggests that what we originally know in sense perception is merely the sense apparition as immediately experienced to the exclusion of anything beyond it. This assumption seems to be a mere superstition, which would make knowledge of the physical world impossible. I, therefore, prefer the term 'sensum,' which is also used by Mr. Alexander. I prefer it because it does not prejudge the view that though knowledge is limited by immediate experience it is not even originally limited to immediate experience." With such sentiments I should humbly and heartily agree, and the point of view which I have here been urging independently has much in common with such a view. But I still do not think that the term 'sensum,' though preferable to 'sense datum,' is a satisfactory one, because even 'sensum' suggests that *what* we sense, *i.e.* the object of sensation, is an immediate

[1] *Mind*, October 1922, p. 386.

content, whereas I believe that *what* we sense, what is given to us, the true sense datum, is a portion of the objective physical world. For what Prof. Stout calls the 'sensum' I prefer to substitute 'content' or 'appearance,' and I must be understood to be using the terms 'sense data,' 'sensa' (as meaning what I call 'contents'), which are current terms, for the sake of convenience only, and still under protest.

(δ) Prof. Broad begins his article by saying (p. 386): "On the one hand we must try to clear up the notion of sensible appearance, on the other we must try to clear up the notion of physical objects." With one or two points regarding the former we shall be concerned. Prof. Broad refers in the first place to Dr. Moore's *Refutation of Idealism*,[1] in which sensations were distinguished from sensa. From this follows a definition of sensible appearance. "When we say that the physical object x appears to us to be circular, we mean on this theory that we are aware of a sensum which really is circular, and that this sensum is connected in some peculiarly intimate way with the physical object x."[2] Thus, when a quality appears there must be an object which really has that identical quality. *E.g.* when a penny appears elliptical, there must be a real elliptical object out there in space. Prof. Broad then refers to the works of Prof. Dawes Hicks and the latest work of Dr. Moore. As we are not at the moment dealing with Prof. Broad's own view, let us digress for a few moments from his article and turn to these later theories to which he refers, keeping in mind for future criticism the view which he has just expounded.

[1] *Mind*, 1903.

[2] *Mind*, Oct. 1921, p. 388.

§ 2. Dr. Moore on Judgments of Perception

(*a*) The view of Dr. Moore to which I think Prof. Broad is referring is contained in Dr. Moore's Presidential Address to the *Aristotelian Society*, 1918-19, entitled, "Some Judgments of Perception." The particular problem of Dr. Moore's in which we are interested is the kind of problem as to what, *e.g.*, I am knowing, when I know this is a finger, or a desk, or a sofa, or an inkstand. He begins by putting forward the hypothesis that the sense datum is the subject about which such propositions are made, an hypothesis which he says does not seem wholly satisfactory. When we say 'this is a sofa,' we do *not* judge "with regard to the presented object . . . that it is a whole sofa. . . . We can, at most, suppose that we are judging it to be part of the surface of a sofa." [1] "Sense data are the sort of things *about* which such judgments as these always seem to be made." [2] Dr. Moore anticipates the objection that our judgment must be about the whole and not about a sensation which mediates my perception of it by saying: "If (which may be doubted) there is anything which is [*e.g.*] this inkstand, that thing is certainly not given to me independently of this sense datum, in such a sense that I can possibly make a judgment about it which is not a judgment about this sense datum. I am not, of course, denying that I do perceive this inkstand, and that my judgment is in a sense, a judgment about it. . . . I am only maintaining that my judgment is *also*, in another sense, a judgment about this sense datum which mediates my perception of the inkstand." [3] After asking whether we can really

[1] *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, 1918-19, p. 10. [2] P. 11. [3] P. 12.

suppose the sense datum to be identical with a part of the surface of the inkstand, and, if so, how we are to explain illusion, Dr. Moore goes on to state his own present view. "What now seems to me to be possible is that the sense datum which corresponds to a tree, which I am seeing, when I am a mile off, may not really be perceived to *be* smaller than the one, which corresponds to the same tree, when I see it from a distance of only a hundred yards, but that it is only perceived to *seem* smaller."[1] Similarly sense data perceived with blue spectacles on, are not perceived to be, but to *seem* different. Dr. Moore ends very humbly indeed: "The truth is I am completely puzzled as to what the true answer can be."[2] Before going on to the other view to which Broad refers, that of Prof. Hicks, let us pause for a moment in order to see what Dr. Moore's theory implies.

(β) Note, in the first place, the identification of the sense datum with a part of the surface of the sofa or inkstand. We are judging the presented object to be part of the *surface* of, *e.g.*, an inkstand, that is to say, we are judging the sense datum to be such, for it is about sense data that judgments of perception are made. It is not, in this case, therefore, the inkstand which is being judged about, because what I perceive immediately (which is what I judge about) is not the inkstand, but a part of it, or what Dr. Moore calls the sense datum.

But if we examine more closely this identification of surface with datum, we get into difficulties. The surface of the inkstand as it is out there, belonging to the inkstand, may be the very object which A and B are perceiving, but it cannot, for that very

[1] *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, 1918-19, p. 23. [2] P. 29.

reason, be the datum or content of A's and B's perception. For, suppose it is a peculiar kind of inkstand, one of the things that people delight to buy because they look like something other than themselves, then A may guess rightly that this is part of the surface of an inkstand, whilst B may say that it is something else. Now, although it is the actual surface of an inkstand to which they both refer, and which is the existing object of their perceptions, yet the content of A's and B's perception is different: for A it appears to be the surface of an inkstand, for B it appears to be the surface of something else. You may of course say that interpretation does not come in, and that pure sense content with which we are acquainted must be distinguished from judgments about it. This, I hope to show below,[1] is an untenable distinction. In addition, owing to the slight variations in the sense organs, the actual sensum, if we could get it pure, would be different. If the datum for B were the *fact* of the surface, then since you cannot pull facts literally apart, or the surface apart from the inkstand, B would be bound to think of the surface as part of what it really is, and error would be impossible. Or, if this is not clear, put the matter in the following way. Suppose the object of A and B is the existing surface of the inkstand, or, simply, 'surface.' But the content cannot be a bare, wholly unqualified given, because A and B, the very instant they perceive anything, must modify and interpret it, a process depending partly upon slight physiological differences in the sense organs of A and B, partly upon the psychical background of A and B. An illustration (which, of course, in itself,

[1] See § 6 below.

does not *prove* my general contention) showing the effect of simple volition upon the sensum is given in Broad's article, where he refers to James' well-known staircase figure which looks like a staircase or an overhanging cornice at will. The fact is that at the knowledge level (and we are not now discussing the cases of immature or half-awakened consciousness) the sense datum always involves the interpretation of a fact, which interpretation may be of a very explicit kind, as when it issues in verbal judgment, or it may be subconscious and quite unaware of itself. Long use has so accustomed us to discriminating and distinguishing them that we do not realise that the appearance of things and qualities is the result of complicated education, that the very existence before us of ' things ' is itself an interpretation of which a very young child is incapable. But, once again, in addition to all this, the fact that I apprehend something, and *you* apprehend it, makes, because my apprehending mind and organism is qualitatively different from yours, the content or datum qualitatively as well as numerically different. The datum (or content) is not the surface of the inkstand, it is the surface as apprehended by A or by B, and, although they come from a different source, and so far are objective, there are as many sense data or ' contents ' derived from the same object, as there are persons who perceive. This is the subjective element, but neither ' subjective ' nor ' objective ' do, as is apparent, explain the situation. It is always subjective-objective.

If we distinguish between the fact and the datum *or* content, substituting the term ' fact ' for ' datum ' in the passages quoted from Dr. Moore, the account

of the inkstand affair becomes luminous. Facts 'present themselves in portions' (*contents* bear the influence of our processes of apprehension, etc.), as we noticed when discussing Smith and Jones and the light on the horizon : the portion of the fact in Dr. Moore's example which I perceive, is the *surface* of an inkstand, and it is certainly true that I do not perceive the whole inkstand at once nor do I perceive it independently of the part, but through it, by means of it. The subject of the proposition is 'this surface,' and the predicate 'is part of the surface of an inkstand,' which is an interpretation of the subject. This is what Dr. Moore means when he says that the judgment is 'in a sense' a judgment about the sense datum (he should say, of course, according to my view, 'about a fact,' for we judge about real facts, *not* about our own sensa) and 'in a sense' a judgment about the inkstand.

(γ) If, in the example of the tree seen at different distances, we discard such an objectionable phrase as 'sense datum' which *corresponds* to 'a tree,' and all it means, we have a perfectly plain statement of the truth, which is not, I venture to think, at all puzzling. The tree is a physical object of definitely measurable size, measurement normally being made by superposition (and not, as some believe, in terms of sense data). When I am a mile off, it is the *tree* which *seems* smaller than it does when I am only a hundred yards off, and not the sense datum, which has no size. Again, things, and not sense data, look blue when you regard the world through blue spectacles.

On Dr. Moore's supposition that it is sense data that we see, it is small wonder that he feels puzzled. That a sense datum, which is, by hypothesis, what

we are directly acquainted with, should seem different from what it is, is indeed paradoxical. It could not possibly seem different from what it is, otherwise it would not be a sense datum. But on the supposition that what we perceive are things, not sense data, it is comprehensible to say that a white cloud seen through blue glasses looks different from a cloud seen normally, whilst it is absurd to say that a white sense datum only *looks* different from a blue one. Being data these do not simply look, but are, different. So it looks as if Dr. Moore ought, in order to be consistent, to give up his view that what we perceive or make judgments about are sense data.

§ 3. Have 'Visual Sense Data' size?

(*a*) There is one difficulty, of which I am very conscious, to which I referred in a general way before, and to which I may now turn for a few moments again. It concerns my statement, 'sense data have no size,' above. To many this will certainly seem paradoxical and preposterous. The truth is that I am, like Dr. Moore, puzzled about the status of sense data, although I think that the theory I am advocating can be vindicated. It certainly does sound absurd to say that when I see a tree on the horizon, my datum, because data have no size, is not smaller than when I see it close, or that when a penny appears elliptical, there is, for the same reason, no elliptical object. It looks as if 'the same reason' must be a wrong reason, as if one were deliberately falsifying obvious facts to fit in with a theory. Can we therefore, from the other end, by simply examining the facts themselves, vindicate the theory? I think it is possible, but it

is extraordinarily difficult, and my reasoning may be completely wrong.

(β) The state of affairs seems to be something like this. We may think of visual size in two ways. (1) We may think of visual size as opposed to real size, the former being determined according to the part of the visual area of the available retina which it occupies, both being measurable. A tree in the distance 'seems small,' that is, is 'visually' small, because you could crowd perhaps many thousands such 'visual' trees into the 'visual' area. (2) But it is doubtful whether philosophers ever mean the size of retinal images when they talk of the visual size of sense data. It is almost certain they mean something else, namely the quite definite size of three dimensional objects seen in perspective, as they would appear if projected on to a two-dimensional plane in front of and at right angles to the line of vision. But although with a plane fixed at a definite distance from a fixed eye the sizes are definite, it is quite obvious that these sizes are arbitrarily determined by the arbitrarily determined fixed distances of the plane from the eye and from the objects. This being so, it will puzzle philosophers to tell us what visual sizes are, since they vary according to the position of a purely imaginary plane, and there is no one position of such a plane set within the eyes' focus that is *better* than any other, that will project *real* visual size for us. True, the projection on a similarly placed plane of a telegraph pole a mile off will always be smaller than the projection of one a quarter of a mile off, but though there is proportion between projections, that is not proportion between size of data. It is just as true and just as untrue to say the moon is as big as a sixpence or as

big as a half-crown. It depends where you hold the sixpence and the half-crown. The only truly measurable objects are, not appearances, but things, telegraph poles, the sun, and, if you like, physical retinal images.

(γ) Ordinary vision, as most thoughtful people are aware, is a curious mixture of two dimensions and of three. Pure vision, when by an effort we get it, is a translation of three dimensions into two. But what we are apt entirely to forget is that this translation, which the eye, unhindered by sophisticated inference, makes of three dimensions, is just the way in which *real* things appear to the eye, that the eye sees things themselves that way and does not in actually seeing project things on to any plane (except the retina). The plane is an invention of artists and philosophers.

(δ) So, if we enquire exactly *what* is 'bigger' or 'smaller,' we shall find that, though real projections are bigger or smaller, there is not any definite thing which can be called an appearance or datum. The literal truth is that it is only real, measurable objects, in three-dimensional space, which *appear* to be bigger or smaller. We may project these objects by our (highly artificial and abstract) imagination on to a two-dimensional plane, and take the imaginary projections on this plane to be real perceived entities having real sizes and relations to one another. But these entities in vision proper do not exist. Only the things which appear do. Furthermore, the attempt to measure and compare 'visual data' is not one which is made normally by the man in the street concerned with 'real' rather than with 'visual' trees. He carries inference from past experience into his very perception, so that it is not exaggeration to say that he *perceives* a telegraph pole half a mile off to be

the *same* size as one fifty yards away. It is sophisticated unpractical persons like the painters and the philosophers who try to understand what 'pure' vision is, who think of the real world of three dimensions as projected on to an imaginary two-dimensional plane. Both are perfectly justified in their attempts to understand, and it is a real fact that pure vision translates three dimensions into two. But philosophers are wrong, in my opinion, when they forget that imaginary two-dimensional projections are but an artificial pretext, which help us, but which do not exist even in pure vision. Vision is mental, is *a way of seeing* three dimensions, and there are no two-dimensional *entities* of vision at all. The projected drawing on a window or a piece of canvas are real enough entities when made. A drawing of a really round penny seen from a certain angle is a real ellipse, which is a definite object or entity. But it is quite mistaken to suppose because of this that there is, somewhere, when a penny seems elliptical or a tree seems smaller than my little finger nail, a real elliptical entity called an 'appearance' or 'datum,' or a 'visual' tree of minute size. It is no doubt a fact again that retinal images are cast, and that the two-dimensional form of these has its important influence on our way of seeing. But the retinal image is not the datum. I may see by means of it, but it is not the content of my perception. The retinal image in my eye is not *what* I see. I see real things in real space as modified by my apprehension, etc. If we persist in thinking of appearances as entities, we are faced with a store of very difficult, and in many ways (it seems to me) artificial problems as to where, and when, they are. Is the 'elliptical penny' at the same place

as the 'real' penny? If so, we must, of course, construct an elaborate theory of space to account for it. Suppose, then, it is not 'out there.' "Where," asks Prof. Drake,[1] "do perceived objects exist?" "Here is a perceived-object describable as *converging railway tracks*. Where does this object exist? Not along the actual right of way; those tracks were laid and remain parallel. . . . Where then?"[2] Prof. Drake answers, "At the brain-point in the world order."

Enormous cleverness and ingenuity has been expended in the answering of such questions, which are very real to those who put them. To me, at any rate, rightly or wrongly, they seem unnecessary. There is a physical world which appears to mind through a medium. The object of mind at any one time is a part of the world; that part of the world as appearing to mind through the physical media of the world, apprehended by processes physiological and psychical, is the immediate content of mind. 'Appearance' then, or 'content,' or (in the bad sense) 'sense datum' is in itself no entity. It has neither colour nor smell nor size nor shape nor position nor duration. Only to the thing which appears can some of these predicates properly be applied and others not. Things appear, and are, extended. Things appear, and are not, coloured: or so I should say.

(ε) Before going on to state Dr. Hick's views (referred to by Prof. Broad) on the datum or content, which are to be found in a paper entitled *The Basis of Critical Realism*,[3] I cannot refrain from simply quoting a sentence by Prof. Hicks criticising Mr. Broad, as it

[1] *Mind*, 1915. [2] *Ibid.* p. 29.
[3] *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, 1916–17 (cf. note on Chap. VI. p. 122).

lends support to the thesis we have been defending. Prof. Hicks, criticising an article of Broad's where he says "the elliptical shape [of a cup] which is seen from the side is as good an object as the circular shape seen from above," [1] replies, "No doubt it is; but only because neither of them is an object." [2]

§ 4. Prof. Hicks' View of Sense Content

(*a*) I am not sure if I understand fully the implication of Prof. Dawes Hicks' somewhat peculiar theory of sense content. As far as I do understand, Prof. Hicks seems to distinguish the content *of* an 'act' of cognition from the content *apprehended by* that 'act.' The 'act' of cognition is to be taken concretely, *i.e.* I know this, or that, and do not know simply in the abstract; and the character of the 'act' itself is dependent on the this or that which is known. The 'act' is an activity which (as it is to be taken concretely) varies in character according to the content towards which it is directed, which latter content is distinguishable (so I read the theory) from the content or quality within the directive act itself. So "the content of the act of cognising blue is not blue, but the awareness of blue, just as the content of the act of perceiving a primrose is not a primrose but the awareness of a primrose. And when I am apprehending blue, I am not apprehending my awareness of blue, but the blue. The content apprehended, that is to say, is not the content of the act by which it is apprehended." [3] Again, "I as being in this state am an existent reality of a certain definite content or character, I can likewise

[1] *Ency. of Religion and Ethics*, vol. 10, p. 590.

[2] *Arist. Soc. Supp.* vol. 2, Symposium, "Is there knowledge by acquaintance?"

[3] *Ibid.* p. 327.

discern the table, as another existent reality also with a certain character or content." [1]

(β) To call the content of the act an 'awareness of blue' at first sight looks like a reversion to the old identification of sensation with sensum. This is, however, corrected by the other half of the theory, which says we are not aware of the awareness of blue but of blue. Although the term 'content' as applied both to act and to object of apprehension appears to me confusing, it will yet be seen that Dr. Hicks' theory is an attempt to get rid of the artificial habit of regarding the sensum as an entity separate altogether from the sensing of it, while clearly distinguishing the two. The act of knowledge must, as Dr. Hicks insists, be taken concretely. There is not (*a*) a sensum, and (*b*) a pure act, but only the act of sensing an object, so that, on the one hand, the act is affected in character by its object, and on the other hand (I should add), the immediate object or content is affected by its being my act.

§ 5. Prof. Broad's Views discussed

(*a*) To return now, after a long digression, to Prof. Broad's article. After referring to Dr. Moore and to Dr. Dawes Hicks, Broad goes on to consider whether sensa are to be regarded as mental, as Prof. Stout formerly held, or as real, which he calls the 'Laird-Alexander' view. He does not wholly approve of either course, but on the whole prefers the latter. Analysing the theory that sensa are mental, he finds three plausible arguments which might be put forward. The first is that sensa appear to be *private*. "It is at least very doubtful whether two people who

[1] *Arist. Soc. Supp.*, vol. ii. p. 328.

say that they are looking at the same physical object are ever aware of precisely similar sensa, but still less of the same sensum at the same time. This seems to suggest that sensa are mental. . . ." [1] Broad, criticising this, thinks the facts better explained by supposing sensa " partly dependent on the positions and internal structure of the percipient's body." [2] To the obvious (and, I think, true) retort that our past experience and present expectations affect the properties of the sensa, Broad replies that this can be explained by saying that past effects upon the body are retained and that these bodily traces affect the present sensa. He cites two examples; one, James' staircase figure, has been already mentioned, the other is stated as follows: " When I turn my head in a room the visual sensa of which I continue to be aware are not affected with sensible movement. If I put my glasses a little out of focus and turn my head the sensa do move." [3] With regard to these arguments I should agree, personally, that two persons never perceive the same sensum or content, and also that this in itself does not prove sensa merely mental. It does, however, seem to me to prove that they are affected by our mental attitude as well as by the undisputed physiological differences which hold between individuals. If Prof. Broad thinks that the whole thing can be reduced to physiological terms, he is indulging in a legitimate, and perhaps, after many days, a verifiable hypothesis. But the physiologist has a very long journey indeed to travel before he can tell us much about these very obscure ongoings. For the present, I believe, it is safer to talk in terms of psychical experience (of, *e.g.*, expectations) of which we do know a little, than of

[1] *Mind*, Oct. 1921, p. 390. [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Ibid.* p. 391.

bodily ' traces,' about which we know next to nothing. Again, apart from all this, and to return to the main issue, it seems to me clear that the very fact that I and you (neglecting physiological differences and past history) experience the same object, makes the experiencing and therefore the experience and therefore the content, anyhow numerically different. The sensum is mentally tinged (though it is not therefore mental) because it is experienced by (dare I say it ?) a mind. Finally, there is no 'sensible' movement, and sensa do not ' move.' Only things do, or appear to.

The second argument which may be brought forward to prove sensa mental is that they may be arranged in a series, starting " with sensations of sight, passing through taste and smell, and ending up with sensations like headache." [1] As the latter seem mental and the series is continuous, it may be thought that the former, *e.g.* a red patch, are also mental. " You must either hold that it is a mistake to suppose that a sensation of red *can* be analysed into an act of sensing and a red sensum, or you must hold that it is a mistake to suppose that a sensation of headache *cannot* be analysed into an act of sensing and a headachy sensum. Stout takes the former alternative, Laird and Alexander take the latter." [2] Broad himself thinks that, " since sensations are not defined psychologically but causally, it is surely very likely that they may include two different classes of experience, one of which can be analysed into act and object and the other of which cannot. These might be called respectively genuine sensations and bodily feelings. The mere fact that both are *called* sensations is a very poor reason for holding that the same analysis must apply to both of

[1] *Mind*, Oct. 1921, p. 391. [2] *Ibid.* p. 392.

them." [1] We must not slur over "the plain introspective difference between the top and the bottom members of the series."

But is it necessary to draw any *epistemological* distinction between 'sensations' and 'bodily feelings'? I do not see why it is. Certainly there seems on the surface to be a difference between experiencing a red patch and experiencing a headache. This difference, however, has mainly to do with the spatial relation between the object sensed and the experiencing body and mind. In the case of the red patch the part of the objective world sensed (not the 'sensum') is outside the body; in the case of the headache the part of the objective world sensed (not the 'sensum') is inside the body. In each case it is the *experiencing* of a part of the objective world which affects what is immediately known, so that there appears what philosophers love to think of as an isolated entity, and to call a 'sensum' or 'datum.' 'Sensum' is a useful, and at times it would seem an indispensable, term, but it is an extraordinarily hard thing to describe in itself, except in the most abstract possible way, because thought of thus it becomes abstract and artificial, whereas really it is, as we saw, the function of a complex process. It is because Broad finds it so difficult to distinguish between sensing and the sensum in the headache example that he wants to abolish the term here. But the difficulty is an old one. It is caused just because we persist in thinking that we sense *sensa* (just as we persist in thinking that we image images) and not real objective *facts*. In the case of the red patch it is easy enough to imagine that we sense a sensum (*i.e.* red patch) outside the body and therefore outside the

[1] *Mind*, Oct. 1921, pp. 393-4.

sensing, which sensum is supposed to have some questionable relation to the physical world. But in the case of the headache the sensing and the sensum are so blurred that it seems stupid to talk of sensing a sensum. So the sensum in this case is abandoned. Why not, therefore, accept the moral so clearly indicated? Why not, in both cases, admit that there is an objective physical happening (whether out of my body or in it) which is what I experience, and that *my*-experiencing-of-*it* constitutes the sensum? The sensum is always an abstraction, epistemologically speaking, it is a function of heterogeneous elements: as an abstraction it can be *defined* just as well in the case of the headache as in the case of the red patch. But to describe it in terms of sense, as is constantly attempted, to give a clear account of it, as a perceptual entity, in such and such case, may well be beyond our powers. For, once more, it is not an entity.

"The third argument for regarding sensa as mental is their resemblances to images, which are supposed to be indubitably mental."[1] Broad admits, with reservations, the analogy, but thinks that images may be held to depend on our bodies, not on our minds. He argues that, though images may depend on volition, so may the reaction that takes place in a test tube, depend on volition, in the sense that we willed the experiment. This does not prove the chemical reaction mental; so neither are images, because they depend upon volition, mental.

As I have already tried to demonstrate the non-existence of images (as distinct from imaging) I shall not pursue this further. I may, however, remark that Prof. Broad's illustration appears to me (I may,

[1] *Mind*, Oct. 1921, p. 394.

of course, misunderstand it) irrelevant. The question as to whether images are mental or not is not directly affected by an examination of the factors which condition images. The causes of imagery might be wholly physiological and yet mental images might 'emerge.'

(β) After an interesting discussion on the character of physical objects, which I shall pass over, Prof. Broad asks: "What is the status of sensa in nature and how are they related to physical objects?"[1] "That physical object which is our body, in conjunction with other physical objects, in some way conditions the sensa of which we become aware; and these sensa in turn give us highly probable knowledge about the shapes, sizes, and motions of physical objects, but no certain knowledge about their other properties. Now what exactly is meant by this phrase 'conditions'?"[2] . . . "Do they produce the sensa? Or do they cause us to become aware of sensa that already exist? Or do they both produce the sensa and make us aware of them? . . . Let us call these three alternatives respectively the *Creative Theory*, the *Selective Theory*, and the *Mixed Theory*."[3]

(γ) The *Mixed Theory* Prof. Broad does not specifically deal with, the *Creative Theory* he rejects, occupying most of his space in dealing with the *Selective Theory*. This involves a difficult and very fascinating discussion upon what is always a very difficult subject, namely the subject of Prof. Alexander's Gifford Lectures. Into this, fortunately, we need not enter, as we have already again and again implicitly rejected forms of the Selective Theory. This

[1] *Mind*, Oct. 1921, p. 398. [2] *Ibid.* p. 398. [3] *Ibid.*

theory is, briefly, that the sensa are already there, to be selected, that they are in some way part of the physical world. Prof. Broad's problem is, what do we mean by 'part,' and 'in some way'? We need scarcely iterate again our very commonplace answer. Yet it seems truer to say that sensa are functions of the heterogeneous factors that we have described, than to say they are physical, or in any sense parts of the physical world out there, ready to be selected.

(δ) We turn, therefore, to the *Creative Theory*, which Broad rejects, and find in that a more probable, though not an altogether satisfactory solution. Its unsatisfactoriness lies in the fact that sensa are supposed to be produced by the interaction of living *bodies* with other physical objects. But it is not *bodies* merely, it is body-and-minds. The thing appears, and it appears to *me*. It is the very fact that I know it, and that you know it, which gives the 'sensum' its non-physical character (just as, on the other hand, the fact that it is the appearance of a physical object gives it its non-mental character). It is not a new physical or any other kind of *entity* which is produced, and if my statement that sensa are *produced* by the interaction of mind-and-body and physical objects, be taken to mean this, I had rather eat my words. It is because Broad will insist on regarding the sensum as an entity (in this case physical) that he is obliged to reject the *Creative Theory*. His main objection is "that it assumes something like creation out of nothing as a result of physical processes." But it does not, if we regard the apprehension-by-mind-through-body-of-physical-objects-in-their-media, as the unit. In that case, sensa are not creations out of

nothing (unless you like to persist in thinking of them so, wrongly); they are, epistemologically, only an abstract way of looking at, of analysing, the continuous process of knowledge of an object.

(ε) We might go on to criticise other theories, but our criticism would in principle be the same. Mr. Russell's theory of the external world is, for example, grounded in the abstractionist fallacy that sense data are entities out of which physical objects are made. The mathematician loves abstraction, and Mr. Russell's world is, if any one's ever was, 'an unearthly ballet of bloodless categories.' Mr. H. A. Prichard, in what seems to me to be in parts a pertinent criticism of Mr. Russell's *Lowell Lectures*, says,[1] "Mr. Russell's views have their origin in the hypnotic influence of pseudo-geometries." Mr. Prichard insists, as I should do, that you cannot piece physical reality together out of appearances, for appearances are not physical or spatial. "No one thinks, or could think, that an appearance to me could be, say, to the left of, or near to, another. . . . Such statements are as obviously untrue as to speak, as Mr. Russell does, of the appearance of a penny as circular, or of a certain appearance as blue."[2] *Quod demonstratum est.* Nevertheless persons evidently *can*, and unfortunately do, think such things.

One might apply to Russell Laird's criticism[3] of 'sensory atomism.' The world of physics is, thinks Russell, definable in terms of sense data, which are as separate from one another, or far more so, as peas on a drum. Once reverse this outlook on the world, once regard the perceptual world as a continuum,

[1] *Mind*, 1915, p. 185, footnote. [2] *Ibid.* p. 162.
[3] *A Study in Realism*, chap. ii.

and Russell's position becomes impossible. The world would then be not a sum of data or sensibilia, but sense data would be discriminations in a continuous world.

§ 6. Knowledge by Acquaintance

(*α*) The view of the datum which I have advocated will affect our attitude towards what is sometimes called 'knowledge by acquaintance.' The current view of the sense datum as a simple entity, a number of which grouped together form the sense object, implies, on its other side, that 'knowledge' of that entity is always simple and complete. We criticised Dr. Moore's statement that the sense datum *seems* smaller, on the ground that the sense datum is definable as what is immediately given, or what we are immediately acquainted with. We might make false judgments *about* sense data, but the latter themselves are unmistakable. I know this green patch directly.

(*β*) Even the more scientific and truer view that sense data are not simple isolable entities, but discriminations made in a sensuous continuum, is not a wholly satisfactory view, though it goes half-way to the truth. It clearly realises that the so-called simple data which the adult thinks he clearly perceives, are really (though not as perceived) highly complex products, depending very largely first upon the practical necessity for cutting up the continuum into complex objects, and second, upon the theoretical game of still further trying to discriminate sense qualities of which these objects seem to be composed. For the young child, as William James well knew, there

is no clear-cut world of objects, but the "big blooming buzzing Confusion." For the normal unphilosophic adult, again, there is not so much (though this is a matter of degree) a hard, cold, round, red, sweet apple, as just an apple to be eaten; whilst the sky which is grey to the man in the street is to the artist a quivering ocean of subtlest colours. So far, so good. We must go further, however. We cannot stop with the infant and say that the presentation continuum is the datum out of which data are to be discriminated. The infant is already equipped with a fine selective mechanism, working all unconsciously, an instrument which enables him to live at (what M. Bergson would call) his own duration, to compass grandly in an instant ten thousand molecules, to swallow ten million atoms, to ignore as he sleeps the whirling of electronic myriads. The true sense datum, what is given (though not that of which we are immediately conscious) must be pushed farther back than even the presentation continuum, it must be nothing less than a part of the physical world. All along we have urged this. What is given, the datum, is not the simple content which it seems, not a content which is self-supporting, existent, with qualities which can be described. The reason that it seems so simple when we begin to theorise about it is that we accept the evidence of perception and take that for an adequate theoretical account of the object of perception. We 'see' simply a red patch: we theoretically conclude, therefore, that a red patch simply is. That is common-sense philosophy with a vengeance. But it is wholly misleading. Acquaintance there may be, and certainly is: I am acquainted with what I call a red patch, without doubt. But 'knowledge by acquaint-

ance ' is a misnomer if by that we mean in any sense knowledge which is complete and perfect.

(γ) If the immediate sense content is a ' given,' it is not a complete or finished given, but is simply a problem presented for knowledge to solve. In practical life we are not concerned with solving the problem, we adjust ourselves to the sensible world and leave it there. For the theory of knowledge, however, it is vital to understand that it is not a ' this ' or a ' what ' that is given, but simply a ' this-what.' *What* is *this* (*e.g.* brown elliptical patch which philosophers say is ' given ')? Well, even to say it is ' this ' means that it is more than mere ' this.' It means that it is at least perceived as distinct from other things. ' *What* is *this?* ' we ask again, pursuing our enquiries. Answer, it is ' brown,' it is a ' patch,' it is ' elliptical,' and so on. But is it ' elliptical ' ? No, it is round, you can define its shape in the immutable objective terms of geometry: it is a penny: it is made from copper, copper comes from the earth, chemists say it is so and so, physicists say it is so and so. Again, is it ' brown ' ? What is ' brown,' is it *in* the penny? So we may go on for a very long time indeed, analysing simply what is given, and finding it to be, not even a bare physical object, nor even an object conditioned by the space it lies in and the air which dims it to the observer, but something affected, in so far as it is given to the observer, by the structure of his sense organs, and in the end, most marvellous and mysterious of all, affected by his mind, which, working through its sense organs, can, by some process unknown, modify what is presented as quantitative motions so that they appear as qualities, so that primaries may appear as secondaries. It is only by knowing all such conditions,

which cannot possibly be known in a single act of perception, that we can, by allowing for their mutual influences on one another, learn to discount these, and so obtain a truer understanding of the very physical object which naïve perception thinks mistakenly that it has before it in isolated purity while perceiving. However we may be 'acquainted,' then, is it not the height of absurdity to suppose, firstly, that there is a simple isolable entity with which we are acquainted, secondly, that our acquaintance with such an 'entity' can be *knowledge* by acquaintance, and lastly, that this knowledge should be regarded as direct, perfect, and complete, because self-contained? To think this is, as we say, to substitute for philosophical thinking, the direct unreflective evidence of perception.

(δ) Yet this is, of course, constantly done. Mr. Bertrand Russell is responsible in modern times for the distinction between 'knowledge by acquaintance' and 'knowledge by description.' The distinction on the surface seems, of course, plain and legitimate enough. "We shall say," says Mr. Russell,[1] "that we have *acquaintance* of anything of which we are directly aware, without the intermediary of any process of inference or any knowledge of truths. Thus in the presence of my table I am acquainted with the sense data that make up the appearance of my table—its colour, shape, hardness, smoothness, etc.: all these are things of which I am immediately conscious when I am seeing and touching my table." Among other things with which we may be acquainted are, *e.g.*, things remembered, our mistakes, ourselves, Universals. Acquaintance of this kind, as an empirical fact, is constantly occurring. It is when he calls

[1] *Problems of Philosophy*, p. 73.

it knowledge of a special and peculiar kind, that Mr. Russell errs. We may be 'acquainted' (though to assume that we are ever *merely* acquainted Mr. Russell admits[1] to be rash), but acquaintance is just the bare beginning of perceptual knowledge, and acquaintance does not give us full or adequate or complete knowledge of *entities* called sense data.

(ε) If there is no peculiar kind of knowledge by acquaintance, then, is it true to say that all knowledge is of the kind known as 'knowledge by description'?[2] That would, I think, be going too far. Mr. Russell's antitheses are, indeed, artificial. It would be equivalent, in the end, to saying that there is no knowledge of any kind which does not involve the use of words or similar symbols,—for 'description' seems to mean description in words.[3] A good deal of discussion has ranged round this point. Prof. Dawes Hicks, whose rather peculiar view of the content of knowledge we have already noticed, suggests that under cover of the one term 'acquaintance' there have been confused two very different kinds of relations, one of which is the relation of subject to object, and the other the relation of the subject to its awareness of the object. (Prof. Broad sums up his criticism of this by the word 'introspection.') He maintains that "from the attitude of 'acquaintance' in Mr. Russell's sense of the term, to that of believing or judging, in his sense of the term, there is no road,"[4] and argues that, although it may be awkward to call it 'judgment,' discrimination and comparison and relation must be involved from the very beginning. He asks,[5] "When I am 'acquainted with' one part of a complex as being to the

[1] *Problems of Philosophy*, p. 72. [2] *Ibid.* p. 82. [3] *Ibid.* pp. 82 ff.
[4] *Proc. Arist. Soc. Supp.* vol. 2, p. 166. [5] *Ibid.* p. 168.

left (say) of another part, what is it that constitutes that difference between such ' acquaintance ' and the judgment that the part B is to the left of the part A ? "

This is a difficult question, but I do not think that if we allow that simple acquaintance (which is not, strictly speaking, allowed even to mutter ' red ! ') is barely knowledge, we are bound to maintain that the simplest kind of knowledge, which contains discrimination, involves judgment, though no doubt most discrimination issues in judgment. For the present I would insist on what is really perfectly obvious once it is pointed out, namely that discrimination and comparison may be, at the adult stage, subconscious processes, ready (yes, and almost more than ready) at any moment to blossom forth into propositional form. The development from bare acquaintance (which is not, we said, unique or perfect knowledge of a peculiar kind) to highly elaborate knowledge expressed in propositions, is quite continuous, and there is no *hiatus*. To say that there is acquaintance, then discrimination, then propositional expression of discrimination, is perhaps true. But if we forget that these are just stages in the development of knowledge, we shall be led into endless discussion, mostly about words. Acquaintance tends to become discriminative, discrimination tends to issue in propositional form, though it need not do so, as, *e.g.*, in listening to a symphony.

(ζ) Both the so-called ' sense datum ' and ' knowledge by acquaintance ' are, then, the products of abstraction. The so-called ' sense datum ' or immediately ' given ' is the function of enormously complicated heterogeneous processes, one of which is a portion of the physical world. It is this latter, taken altogether in its environment, which is really what is presented to

sense (though sense alone is unable to know it as it is) and is therefore truly the sense datum. Acquaintance again is, at its purest, an ideal limit which is a barest awareness, scarcely more than feeling. The least discrimination or comparison is the beginning of judgment which, normally speaking, tends to expand into verbal propositions. From this account of the two it will be readily understood that ' knowledge by acquaintance ' is certainly not a perfect knowledge of a real entity which men call mistakenly, ' the sense datum.'

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CHAPTER VIII

KNOWLEDGE, TRUTH, AND ERROR

§ 1. *Prolegomena.*—(α) Previous theories unsatisfactory. (β) Knowledge has a subjective factor as well as (γ) an objective, and knowledge is self-transitive. Hoernlé quoted. To understand more fully, let us examine

§ 2. *The character of cognitive acts.*—(α) Various views. (β) Broad's analysis misleading because he takes whole cognitive process, including object, as *given*, and not as transitive. (γ) Knowledge is not relation, as Moore thinks, but involves consciousness of one.

§ 3. *Universals.*—(α) A. How do we come to know them? B. What is their nature: do they, *e.g.*, form a separate realm? (β) 'Subsistence.' Laird's criticism of the abstractionist and the word-symbol theories.

A. (γ) To abstract is to think not of a 'thin' particular or a self-contradictory complex, but of a definite something which symbolises a class. In *this* sense abstractionist and word-symbol theories are right. But that is not to say Universal *is* an abstraction or a symbol. What is it, then?

B. (δ) Stout's view that Universal is the distributive unity of a class endorsed. (ε) Summary. Advantage of approaching problem from these two points of view.

§ 4. *Truth.*—(α) Truth and knowledge. Are there 'kinds' of truth? On the whole, no, though an analysis of kinds of knowledge throws light on truth. (β) 'Prehension.' (γ) Knowledge is direct; mind, though it functions through instruments and involves processes, is in direct contact with reality. Stress on one or another aspects of knowledge leads to various errors of 'correspondence,' 'coherence,' neo-realism. (δ) Correspondence and coherence are complementary *tests*, but do not describe truth of knowledge, for knowledge 'gets through' to reality.

§ 5. *The objective and subjective aspects of knowledge and truth.*—(α) Kinds of knowledge means normally kinds of objects known. Scientific distinguished from artistic and religious objects, which are referred to in next chapter. (β) Reciprocal influence of personal character and knowledge in which a person has interest. (γ) 'Personal' and 'impersonal' truth. (δ) Even 'impersonal' and 'scientific' truth is originally 'personal.'

§ 6. *Analysis of Truth and Error.*—(α) 'Perceptual' truth chosen as representative. (β) Problem of error not isolated from that of truth. (γ) Smith and Jones again. Smith right because he apprehends mentally the relevant *complex* fact of which 'this' appears. Jones wrong because though he mentally apprehends *facts* and thinks of them as a complex, yet does not mentally apprehend the relevant *complex* fact of which 'this' appears. (δ) Ways in which error may arise. (ε) Summary.

§ 1. Prolegomena

(α) In the theories of knowledge and truth we have hitherto examined, we have not been able to find satisfaction. The theory of knowledge and the theory of truth must go together, and before we can evolve any workable theory of the nature of truth, we must understand as clearly as we can what we mean by knowledge. The epistemological monistic accounts, Idealism and Neo-Realism, were, we found, unsatisfactory, because they failed to make a really clear distinction between subjective and objective, thus falling into the errors of subjectivism and objectivism respectively. For Idealism there is, apart from knowledge and truth, no object; for Neo-Realism the subject tends to disappear: truth is a property of objects themselves. Again, the forms of the correspondence theory which we examined were found wanting. Correspondence involves a relation between what are regarded as two separate entities, and the difficulty of representative perception is never really solved. Without some kind of superior knowledge, which is by hypothesis excluded, as that again would involve truth problems, we can never know that there is correspondence, because we do not know that with which our knowledge is supposed to correspond.

(β) I have all along suggested, on the other hand, that knowledge must be of a direct (and not,

e.g., of a 'corresponding' or 'copying') kind, though working by means of processes and through media. It must further be knowledge by a mind of an object which is not that mind, and which is, in the kind of cases we have analysed, knowledge of the physical world.[1] Knowledge of the external world is a kind of grasping of the physical by the psychical, a process normally issuing in judgment, judgment again being normally expressed in language, making propositions. To use the terms 'mind' and 'psychical' is not to presuppose any particular theory of them. I am of course aware that it is customary among certain present-day schools of thought to deny altogether the existence of mind. Such theories I am not concerned here to discuss. I can only assert that what I mean by 'mind,' 'mental,' 'psychical,' when I speak of these in connection with cognitive facts, is a plain immediate experienced fact. That there is a plain, empirical difference between my knowing of an object and the object which I know, seems to me impossible to doubt. Knowledge is, among other things, an intimate experience of reality; it stirs feeling and desire; when I discover something for the first time I am thrilled, perhaps, and that thrill is the accompaniment of a cognitive experience which is nothing if it is not psychical. It is, then, the experience of knowing which I mean when I speak of 'mind grasping an object,' etc., and this is not an hypothesis merely, it is the solidest, nearest, most intimate fact I am aware of. There is a subjective factor in knowledge, and any epistemology which ignores it (however it may explain

[1] I may remark that, when I use the term 'knowledge' I am, unless otherwise specified, thinking of the knowledge of sensible objects, not of my own or of other minds, or of Universals. For remarks on Universals see below, § 3.

it) is simply ramming its head against a stone wall. If we try to describe knowledge either, as New Realism does, as a relation between, or a property of, objects, or, on the other hand, as *literally* (in Dr. Bosanquet's phrase[1]) "a development of the objective," we shall find it exceedingly difficult satisfactorily to explain error.

(γ) Nevertheless phrases like Dr. Bosanquet's have of course a most important application. The mental factor is not itself apparent directly when we know an object. The whole process of knowledge is, as I have said before, transitive; it is a focussing upon its objects, and when we speak, for example, of the 'system of knowledge' we mean the systematic arrangement of the objects of knowledge. Logic is not psychology; we are not in logic interested in mental processes so much as what those processes, which do not work *in vacuo*, are apprehending. But again, epistemology or the theory of knowledge is not simply logic, it has been called a blend of logic and psychology; and so in epistemology we must give equal consideration to the mental factor in knowledge, in order that we may discover its relation to the object of knowledge.

So far, then, we have regarded knowledge, taking mainly sense-knowledge as typical, as a mental or psychical apprehension of a non-mental object. We have found, in analysing the nature of the content or so-called 'datum' that it was absolutely essential to regard the process of knowledge as one continuous whole in which heterogeneous factors could be discerned, an activity of the mind working through a nervous organism upon the physical world which is given to these. You may of course prefer in certain

[1] In, *e.g.*, *Essentials of Logic*, p. 22.

contexts to define the matter causally and say that the physical processes stimulate the senses and so awaken the cognitive processes of mind to activity. That does not greatly matter: it is, as I say, a question of context. The cognitive processes remain the same, and they involve the direct active continuous relation of mind to its objects. I may refer in support of this view to an old but valuable article of Mr. Hoernlé, in which he insists that the usual distinction between the existence (a psychical fact), the content (which distinguishes it from other ideas), and the meaning, of ideas, is misleading. An idea is primarily not an existence nor a content, but a reference to something, its meaning. It is only when we fail to understand, that the idea itself (*e.g.* the word or image) becomes prominent in consciousness. There are no 'mere' ideas, but ideas and meaning are what Mr. Hoernlé calls "a complete psychical whole." By calling it this, Mr. Hoernlé[1] does not imply "that the 'thing signified' is itself necessarily psychic," but uses the term "simply to express the fact that 'to mean something' is after all a conscious act, and that . . . self-transcension of consciousness inherent in all objective reference is something experienced by us."[2] The meaning of the sign does not, as William James thought, consist in its "psychic fringe." This would lead to solipsism. The meaning[3] of Boston is not an image but a town in America. (I should agree with the spirit of this, but would say that the meaning is, rather than the fact of Boston, the fact-of-Boston-as-I-think-of-it.[4]) Again, Mr. Hoernlé believes that memory

[1] "Image, Idea, and Meaning," *Mind*, 1907. [2] *Ibid.* p. 85.

[3] I am here referring to what I previously called 'subjective' meaning. Here it is chiefly denotative.

[4] See earlier, Chap. V. § 5 (γ).

and perception are just different ways of experiencing the same content, "although the subjective character of this experience of the redintegrated content differs from the subjective character of the original experience."[1]

How true, on the whole, these statements are will be realised by those who have been able to follow sympathetically the arguments we have put forward. The curious thing about them is that they are often in large part readily admitted, and yet no theory of knowledge or truth which we have examined has made good use of them. It must be obvious to-day that ideas and knowing are transitive in nature. Standard psychologists, like Ward and Stout, are emphatic upon the point. Yet this very same 'self-transcension of consciousness,' which is 'something experienced by us,' this essential character, the character of knowing, has been completely forgotten by those who profess to give us accounts of truth, which is, after all, nothing else but knowledge doing its job. Looked at in this way, it will readily be seen how very far are 'correspondence' or 'coherence' from giving us an account of the nature of truth, which is to knowledge as health is to the organism, namely, knowledge's true functioning. Why should we so be concerned with *tests* of truth rather than truth itself? Is true knowledge in any sense 'correspondence' or 'coherence'? No, rather is truth just the quality of knowing as it performs efficiently its function, namely that of apprehending reality as it is. We shall find that it will pay us to take good heed of this.

[1] "Image, Idea, and Meaning," *Mind*, 1907, p. 93.

§ 2. The Character of Cognitive Acts

(*a*) As we have laid so much stress on the activity of knowledge in transcending the psychical, and as this is going to be of such central importance when we come later to describe truth, we must discuss a little further the nature of the cognitive act. In doing this I should like to refer specially to a *Symposium* of the *Aristotelian Society*,[1] "On the Character of Cognitive Acts," in which a number of interesting differences are displayed. Prof. Laird maintains there that cognitive events are dated events which refer to objects either timeless, or present, past, or future. We may have very different attitudes towards precisely the same object, and we are acquainted with these attitudes just as we are acquainted with sour or loud. Dr. Moore, on the other hand, reduces cognition to the holding of a relation between a sense datum and a character. Prof. Broad tends in this respect to agree with Dr. Moore, denying that we have any knowledge of a mental act, the existence of which he regards as a precarious inference. In cognition we are aware of the objects and their relation, and not of the 'act.' Prof. Dawes Hicks contrariwise maintains strongly that cognitive acts do exist, that they are neither inferences nor known by introspection, but are experiences with which we are directly acquainted. Dr. Hicks also criticises Dr. Moore's view that knowledge is a relation, and insists that it is rather the mental discrimination of a relation.

(*β*) Which of these various points of view, if any, are we to adopt? We may safely begin, I think, by accepting Prof. Laird's account of cognitive events

[1] *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, 1920–21.

as dated events referring to objects. Perhaps this sounds so obvious as to be beyond dispute. That this is not so is shown by an interesting analysis of alternatives given by Prof. Broad. Prof. Broad suggests[1] three possible alternatives as to the nature of a cognitive act, *e.g.* seeing something (if we suppose hypothetically for the moment that there is such a thing as an act). In the first case the object would be a constituent of the act, which would be, as a whole, I-seeing-*x*. Prof. Broad rejects this alternative as he thinks it impossible to suppose that this present cognition could contain, *e.g.*, a past constituent. The second alternative would be that the act of seeing would be the link between me and *x*, *x* being thus outside the act of seeing. This is again rejected. If the 'act' is present it is difficult to see that the act can be the relation between me and the remembered object. Thus a third alternative is put forward and provisionally accepted. The 'act' is simply *my-seeing-of* an external *x*. Even yet, Broad thinks, the mixture of past and present rather tends to refute the 'act' theory.

The truth is that the whole analysis, though interesting and bringing out certain important points, really begs the question. By the use of the term 'constituent,' Prof. Broad is presupposing that the elements in the cognitive process must be given, here and now, and this being so, it is *of course* true that a complex wholly present cannot, *ex hypothesi*, contain a past constituent. If we are to regard the cognitive act as wholly present, self-contained, self-sufficient, then we will certainly be hard put to it to explain memory. But then, on this view, which is what

[1] *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, 1920–21, pp. 141-42.

Prof. Broad is really assuming, the third alternative is as difficult to accept as the others, and that is one reason why he finds it difficult to accept the 'act' theory at all. But a cognitive act is quite otherwise. It is not self-contained, it is only completed in its reference to the object, which may be present or past or future or timeless. It is, as we have insisted over and over again, a self-transitive process, in its very nature directing itself outwards in time and space. So, while we accept Prof. Laird's account of it as a *dated* event, in so far as it is a felt experience taking place at a definite time, we must not forget that cognitive consciousness is, as Mr. Hoernlé said, a 'self-transcension,' which transcension is directly 'experienced' by us. I can only reiterate that it is a simple and ultimate fact that I, now, can think of the past. The unsophisticated observer may well be, as Prof. Dawes Hicks remarks, a more reliable witness on this point than is the philosopher. The cognitive act is 'erlebt'; it is not at the time of its occurrence an object for knowledge, neither is it a 'precarious inference' that I am actively thinking now of what occurred yesterday.

(γ) It will be obvious that if we believe in 'cognitive acts' we shall be bound to reject, as we did when criticising other New Realists, Dr. Moore's view that cognition is a relation. The premises of his inference seem to me very unsound. He says: "The only entity other than the sense datum itself, which it seems to me must necessarily exist at any time at which a sense datum is seen is an event which consists in the holding of a certain relation between the sense datum and some character. And since a cognitive act . . . must exist in every such case, it seems to

me that we must identify such a cognitive act with an event of this kind." [1] You may say that *I* see it or that *you* see it, but there is no reason, says Dr. Moore, for believing in anything more than the relation.

Perhaps this is a case of philosophies being based on 'instinct,' and the difference between different men's instincts makes it impossible for some to understand others. I can understand some of the theories which lead (or mislead) philosophers into denying mind. But I find it impossible to begin to comprehend the attitude which denies what seems to me an immediate fact of mental experience, the fact of my knowing something, and that this is (to me axiomatically) different from the relations which I know. That knowledge is not itself a relation between entities,[2] but the apprehension of relations, seems as clear to me as midday sunshine. In some ways I wish it were not, and that I had the gift of understanding what to Dr. Moore and New Realists seems a necessary fact.

There is a problem which hovers in the background, a little out of the main line of our speculation, which demands attention and which may as well be faced now as at any other time. Let us therefore sidetrack for a few moments.

§ 3. Universals

(*a*) It is the problem of Universals. We touched on it, it will be remembered, in our chapter on Critical Realism, and here we intend simply to expand a little further the same point of view.

We have assumed a simple view of knowledge as mind's direct apprehension of the real. What of

[1] *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, 1920–21, p. 137.

[2] Cf. the difficulties noted earlier, *passim*, of regarding belief as a 'real' relation.

Universals, which are an important element in our knowable world, and which to some even seem to form an independent world? Are Universals as real as tables and chairs: if so, is our knowledge of them of the same kind as our knowledge of chairs and tables, and how are Universals related to things? In my answers to these questions, I shall deal first (1) with the genesis of our *knowledge* of them, making some reference to Prof. Laird's useful discussion of the subject.[1] Afterwards (2) I shall refer to Prof. Stout's view as to their objective nature.

(β) We are faced at the outset by a kind of dualism erected by some into a real bifurcation of reality. Tables and chairs exist; Universals, *e.g.* redness, we are told, subsist. Let us accept that, and try to find out what Universals are, and what they do.

The first possibility that Prof. Laird considers in the passage referred to is that Universals are abstractions, and this view he rejects. According to the abstractionist theory, Universals are just thin particulars created by stripping individual things of all their qualities. "It might be possible to arrive at redness by this process after eliminating the distinctive shades of red, but it would be interesting to know what colour is when the redness of the reds and the greenness of the greens have been abstracted from it. . . . Again the mutilated figure of a triangle which is neither right-angled, acute-angled or obtuse-angled, is plainly not triangular." [2]

A second alternative is therefore examined. "Universality, according to this second theory, is a function of certain particulars, *i.e.* of words and images and

[1] *A Study in Realism*, chap. vi., particularly pp. 109–118.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 111.

other signs."[1] These words are particular, their universality lies in their function, which is to lead the mind at once to any of the particulars symbolised by the words. Laird argues that word symbols may be useful, but that the theory begs the question, because the words *signify* Universals, and it is the *Universals*, not the words, which apply to particular instances. "It is simply absurd to say that words are identical with general facts."[2]

Laird then goes on to state a third view, which is not important for us. He subsequently discusses the mediaeval controversy between Universals, as *in re*, or *ante rem*, or *post rem*. Let us now examine the questions put forward. I shall defend generally the thesis that (A) from the psychological or genetic point of view, Universals are arrived at by a process of abstraction symbolised by words; that it does not therefore follow that Universals *are* mere abstractions, and that (B) they are in their nature what Stout calls 'distributive' unities.

(A) *The Way in which we come to think of Universals*

(γ) I should like to point out, in the first place, that the metaphor of the peeled onion will not apply to the true process of universalising by abstraction; it will scarcely apply even to the rather vague 'imagery' which we use in unsuccessfully trying to picture universals. As I try to think of 'colour,' indistinct images of blue, and violet, and red, flit across my mind rapidly, as concrete instances would persist in doing before the minds of Socrates' unfortunate victims. But they are still single instances, not qualityless

[1] *A Study in Realism*, p. 111. [2] *Ibid.* p. 112.

nonentities. They may flit so quickly that I think of my 'image' as a ghastly mixture of them. So with 'triangle,' 'rain,' and any other example. Or if I am well used in the habit of trying to picture Universals,[1] I may instead use a single, vague, but still concrete 'image,' or, last of all, a verbal 'image,' which symbolises the darting of my mind from one example to another. When we try to universalise, we do not think either of a thin particular, or a ghastly complex of contradictory qualities, as, *e.g.*, 'rectilinear figure' would have to be if it were to include its particular embodiments. We image a definite, if perhaps dim or vague or confused, particular, which we take as standing for, as representing, a class. From the *subjective* point of view a Universal simply means the ability to pass from a particular to any other member of the same class. (Hume said very much the same thing, and, as every one knows, Hume was a Nominalist. Where I should differ from him, is, as we shall see, in distinguishing the psychological, which in this respect was Hume's, point of view, from the metaphysical. Psychological Nominalism, if one may coin such a term, may be true. Metaphysical Nominalism certainly is not.) As to what the class itself is in its nature we shall have to explore in (B). We are here concerned with the genesis of Universals as they appear to the mind. In this, very definite sense, to universalise means to have the *tendency* to pass to appropriate particulars.

The second alternative which Laird mentions does, therefore, seem to me to have a certain value, from a psychological point of view, though the theory is wrong in offering itself as a metaphysics of Universals.

[1] I do not contend that we *can* picture Universals.

"Why," asks Laird, "is the sound 'redness' a substitute for the detailed examination of red things? The sound surely is only the symbol for the quality and therefore not identical with it."[1] Certainly I agree that the sound is not literally the Universal (which I should distinguish, in opposition to Laird and in company with Stout,[2] from 'quality,' which is a species of 'character'), but is a symbol. To take the universal to be a mere sound is the extremest of Nominalism. Yet from the psychological point of view, a word-sound symbolising a Universal has that efficacy, namely, to call up a particular from which we may pass to many other particulars of the same class. The sound 'redness' is literally and directly the sign for my mind to begin thinking of all kinds of things that are red. If my mind does not seem to begin to be thus active, or if I think only of one red patch, it is because my mind has in the past gone through the process, or because I may not be greatly interested in thinking of the meaning of the symbol, and stop at its sound, or at the very least have just a 'flash' of what it means. When we read books, the words, if we understand them, stimulate, as it were, these flashing messages from the mind to all kinds of particular objects, as if to say "yes, I know you of old, I just touch you as I go along to see that you are all still really there." If we do not understand the words, we start searching among the particulars very carefully indeed.

The process becomes clearer if we reverse our way of looking at it, and consider how the idea of Universals

[1] *A Study in Realism*, p. 112.

[2] "The Nature of Universals and Propositions," reprint from *Proc. Brit. Acad.* vol. x. p. 4.

arises in the mind. The child sees a number of objects of different shapes and sizes, all painted, say, red. Some one says ' red ' as each one appears, and the child comes to learn that different *things* may have similar *qualities* called ' red.' The next stage is that of abstraction. We call the separate objects ' red,' but we say that they all possess ' redness.' To distinguish ' redness ' from ' red ' aided by a word symbol, that is, to abstract, to regard a quality so that it seems to be apart from particulars, is an ultimate property of the human mind. By means of it the human mind is able to range rapidly " from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven." The whole business of science, philosophy, poetry, become possible because we use words, because we can abstract from the particulars and are not tied to them hand and foot.

But because of this emancipation from crawling upon the belly, we go too far and fancy we can fly even without the air that makes common things beautiful. We can only *distinguish* qualities from the things in which they exist, we cannot separate them, and it is folly to suppose that ' universals ' thus distinguished subsist in a realm of their own apart from particulars. For in particulars their very existence is realised.

That is not to say that there are only particulars, however. If we said this we should be offering a prejudice (based upon a psychological truth) for metaphysics. We shall see in a moment that the class is as ultimate and real as the particular is, is different from particulars, but is not separate from them. This leads us to Prof. Stout's view.

(B) *The Nature of Universals*

(δ) The theory of Prof. Stout to which I refer was expressed in a paper delivered by Prof. Stout before the British Academy.[1] A consideration of these may suffice to guard us from the accusation of extreme Nominalism to which we may appear to have laid ourselves open. We have approached the problem of Universals from the genetic, subjective, psychological side, where a healthy empirical particularism seems to be the only method of approach. The puzzle, however, has its metaphysical side. What is the true nature of Universals ?

Prof. Stout holds that the Universal is a unity of a class, that it is what he calls a ' distributive unity,' and that this unity is ultimate, any attempt at analysis leading to a vicious circle. Characters (qualities, relations) are not regarded by him as Universals but as particular instances of the common class which has ' distributive unity.' He criticises very strongly the position that, *e.g.*, if two billiard balls are round and smooth or if Jones and Robinson are both happy, that the roundness or smoothness of the balls and the happiness of Jones and Robinson are somehow single qualities permeating the different individuals. " Of two billiard balls, each has its own particular roundness separate and distinct from that of the other, just as the billiard balls themselves are distinct and separate. As Jones is separate and distinct from Robinson, so the particular happiness of Jones is separate and distinct from that of Robinson. . . . To say that particular things share in the common character is to say that each of them has a character which is a particular

[1] Vol. x., " The Nature of Universals and Propositions " (already referred to).

instance of this kind or class of characters. The particular instances are distributed amongst the particular things and so shared by them." Prof. Stout thus occupies an intermediate position, admitting as he does that a class or kind or Universal has real being while emphasising the particularity of the characters, qualities, and relations, of things. The Nominalists, on the other hand, asserting the particularity of characters or qualities, deny that there is anything beyond this, and that there is any unity beyond the resemblance of these particulars. Stout quite justly points out that we cannot stop here, and that the very notion of resemblance itself involves more than mere particularity. Again, 'all triangles' cannot be generated out of resembling particulars. Prof. Stout characterises as nonsense Berkeley's view that a given particular triangle is taken as representing all other figures which resemble it in a certain respect.

While we sympathise with the general criticism of Nominalism, it appears necessary here to distinguish again, as we have just done, between the Universal, or unity of a class as an existing fact, and the method or way in which we come to recognise Universals. Prof. Stout has in mind, I think, the fact of the Universal, whilst the Nominalists, Berkeley and Hume among them, have in mind, as I suggested in parenthesis earlier, what I here call the genetic point of view. From this point of view, Berkeley is not talking such complete nonsense, though as metaphysics this view is untenable. We do, as has been shown, come to recognise Universals by abstraction from resembling particulars, and the Universal, once abstracted from the particulars, has again to be thought of, however vaguely, as realising itself in particulars, if it is to

have meaning for mind. In *this*, psychological, sense, it is not nonsense, but true, that *we take* a particular triangle as representing all other figures which resemble it. Psychologically, subjectively, to universalise is to pass to similar particulars by means of a symbol.

On the other hand we cannot stop with particulars, as Stout very rightly urges. The mind may be at home in the realm of particulars, but the world is certainly more than an aggregate of these. We are faced with the ultimate metaphysical fact of the Universal or the Class, and that is why Berkeley's and the Nominalistic position fails to be adequate. We may and do discover Universals through contact with similar particulars. But the class term does not connote a particular, even as representative of other particulars: it connotes plainly a class, the unity of which is very justly described by Prof. Stout as distributive. We can heartily endorse everything that Prof. Stout says about this. The term distributive is valuable because it emphasises equally that the Universal is only realised in particulars on the one hand, and on the other hand that particulars do share in the common unity of class. It was the failure to realise the significance of both sides of what to human minds must always seem something of a paradox, which led to the old errors of extreme Realism and extreme Nominalism and to the modern view, which Stout criticises, that the Universal is a single character pervading particulars. This latter view, like that of mediaeval realism, is the outcome of speculative intellectual love of the unity in things, a love which enthrones the One above the Many. Nominalism, contrariwise, is, and was, the creed of the men of common sense and action, of those who loved the

variety and multiplicity of facts. The impression which plurality makes is apt to blind the eyes to the essential unity to be found everywhere in experience. But only in the combination of the two points of view is truth to be found. Many have rendered lip service to the 'One in the Many' or 'Unity in Multiplicity,' but it is one of the hardest of philosophic disciplines to avoid both the Scylla of an abstract Monism and the Charybdis of a particularistic Pluralism. It is nevertheless the way of the world (why, we know not) that there should be many things and that these many things should meet, without losing one iota of their individuality, in one kind, which apart from them has no meaning, and yet which in them becomes something other than a single kind. So the term distributive unity is invaluable.

(ϵ) There are, then, in considering the problem of the Universal or class these two distinct aspects, and it is convenient and useful to notice them, as some errors, *e.g.*, those of abstractionism and of the word-symbol theory, which Laird criticises, arise solely through a too exclusive emphasis upon the genetic or psychological point of view. This point of view (A) teaches us that the Universal means to begin with a useful symbol (usually a word) coined in contact with resembling particulars, which stands for the tendency to return to those particulars. But (B) a closer study of what Universals are in themselves reveals the fact that there are in the world many particulars which naturally group themselves in classes, the unity of which is conveniently described by the logical term 'distributive unity.' In no case must the Universal be regarded *either* as simply beyond the particulars *or* as simply in them. It is not *beyond* the particulars

because it has no existence apart from them (even on the psychological side as a conceptual symbol we saw it only had meaning for the mind in so far as particularised). It is not *in* the particulars because what is in particulars is itself particular, a character such as a quality (or relation). It is simply the class of particulars: so the terms '*in re*' or '*ante rem*' or '*post rem*' do not quite properly apply, for the universal is in none of these ways singly, related to the particular thing. On the other hand, if the universal is the concrete distributive unity of an existing class, I rather doubt the advisability of saying (in view of its dangers) that the Universal 'subsists' rather than exists.

Universals, then, do not form any independent realm of their own, but are the ways in which realities arrange themselves, our ways of coming to know them being by abstraction and re-concretion.

§ 4. Truth

(*a*) From all that has been said, it will be apparent that the definition of truth follows directly from our account of knowledge. Truth is, indeed, simply, as I said, the quality of knowledge perfectly fulfilling its functions. (We decided in our second chapter that it is possible to have completely true knowledge which is not the *whole* of knowledge.)

It would not be quite correct, I think, literally to identify truth with knowledge. It would be apt to lead to confusion. The term 'knowledge' is generic rather than exactly specific; under it we can class kinds of knowledge: again it is not uncommon to speak, rather inaccurately, of 'false' knowledge and 'true' knowledge. The latter fact does not, of

course, render it illegitimate to identify truth with knowledge, but, as I say, it would cause confusion if we did so. The objection that there are different kinds of knowledge is more powerful, unless we also postulate 'kinds' of 'truth,' which, of course, may be done with a certain legitimacy, truth sharing in the species of knowledge. *E.g.*, the objects with which the mind is in relation may have from a human point of view different values, so that in one sense we may speak, concretely, of 'higher truth.' Again, the distinction between perceptual and conceptual knowledge, which is real, might be said to apply to truth. On the other hand, just because knowledge is always an activity with physiological and psychical accompaniments, which truth is not, the term 'kinds' of truth may mislead. Truth in *all* kinds of knowledge is just the 'knowingness' of knowledge. When I perceive a green tree, my whole psycho-physical adjustment to the object is so different from my adjustment when I only think of the tree, that I am justified in calling perception and thought different kinds of cognitive acts. But the truth, *qua* truth, of perception and thought is one. It is just the fulfilment, in both cases, by my mind of its cognitive function. Nevertheless, although truth is one, it is important, as we shall see, to discover the different ways in which truth is specifically realised in different kinds of concrete knowledge.

(*β*) I may refer in this connection to a term I have formerly used,[1] which, although somewhat uncouth, has a certain pictorial value. It is 'prehension' as used to illustrate the nature of true knowledge. Knowledge is an active taking hold of something that

[1] *Phil. Review*, vol. xxi. No. 1.

is given; knowing is prehensile, it is not a static condition of having ideas in the mind which idly represent something outside it. Truth on the other hand, is just the quality of knowing's successful prehension. Except for its pictorial value the term is, as I remarked, uncouth; it suggests monkeys, their tails, and branches of trees, and I should not dream of recommending its too serious use. The term 'successful *apprehension*' might be used, but it has other good uses, and is scarcely so symbolic of the active character of knowledge (still, we shall find ourselves using it at times). If we can think, then, without too much effort, of a character or quality of successful prehension, that character or quality will be truth.

The question at once arises, what do we mean by the vague and metaphorical phrase 'successful prehension'? Our thesis right through has been, that *all* cognitive activity, even when the cognition as a whole is false, involves the direct relation of mind to reality, that it is in some way 'prehension.' What then is the differentia between cognitions which are true and cognitions which are false? These important questions we shall return to towards the end of the chapter.

(γ) In the meantime, notice that our theory of truth as a quality of a whole active cognition of an object, places it in a category apart from other theories. There are a series of errors regarding the theory of truth which seem to me to be graded from bad to worse, according as they forget more and more that knowledge is always originally in its essence the living function of a mind in contact with reality. ('Mind' here should mean 'finite mind,' because we have no right anyhow to *begin* our theory of truth from the side of an Absolute.) Active knowledge, the function of living mind,

normally expresses itself in judgments and propositions, which latter, as they are in words, tend to become abstracted symbols, dissociated from any particular mind. Further, propositions, which can be arranged in systems, are not properly regarded as self-contained, they have an objective side, they have some relation to a reality beyond them, which again in its turn is a system of laws. When any one of the steps in the development of full-fledged judgment is isolated and taken to be the whole, the others being forgotten, then we get false notions of truth and knowledge.

To begin with, all theories are apt to forget the relation between judgment and proposition. Joachim, we remember, labels judgment a 'hybrid,' because it contains psychical as well as logical elements. In this case a hybrid is a very good thing, it is the matrix of knowledge. Philosophers, however, prefer to deal with propositions, the external *expression* of judgments. This in itself is perfectly natural and legitimate up to a point, except that they forget its maternal ties and regard the proposition as a self-sufficient entity. If we cared to borrow Prof. Montague's term we might say that verbal propositions are true only in a 'metonymous' or borrowed sense. Now the trouble begins. Philosophers like Russell or the Critical Realists take propositions by themselves and say that they are true when they 'correspond' to reality, ignoring the fact that propositions are crystallised judgments that once were living acts of knowledge, and that the nature of knowing (and therefore truth) cannot without caricature be described as 'correspondence.' The Idealists, on the other hand, make much of the fact that propositions can

be arranged in system. They are so impressed by the systematic way in which propositions (which are of course about reality which is systematic) can be arranged in a system, that they sometimes forget, first, the original living relation of a proposition to a finite mind, second, the reference of propositions to a reality beyond themselves, so that, third, the natural end of their deliberation is that the system of propositions tends to approach, though it never quite *is* the reality. The American Neo-Realists, finally, are farthest of all from salvation, because they ignore in their theory of knowledge, the elemental distinction between knowing and the object of knowledge. No ' act ' exists, truth is reality—and so is error. Even Idealism is not so far fallen as this. Idealism at least allows a difference in degree between subjective and objective, and it is again, I think, less heinous to mistake truth for reality than to mistake reality for truth. Truth can only be a property of cognition, and not of objects. Another example of the refusal to distinguish truth, though not knowledge, from reality, is seen in an article by Prof. Lloyd Morgan,[1] who maintains that there is *truth* in the structure of knowledge *and* in the structure of the knowable world, and that there is ' correspondence ' between the two systems.

(δ) None of these theories then, properly describe the nature of truth, which is bound up with the nature of knowledge. I pointed out in an earlier chapter the meaning and value of ' correspondence ' as a practical test of truth. In science we test our hypotheses by experiment, we see whether theory ' corresponds ' with perceived fact, by finding whether the proposition describing by hypothesis what *ought*

[1] " Fact and Truth," *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, 1916–17.

to happen, agrees with the proposition describing what is perceived to happen. This is what 'correspondence' really *means*, and of course it does not describe the nature of truth. This 'correspondence,' again, though valuable as a test, is not wholly reliable, as perception may be mistaken, and even in certain cases, hallucinatory. Some form of 'coherence' must, therefore, be applied (though an idealist would protest that this is not what he means by 'coherence'). An hypothesis has a fair chance of being true if it fits in systematically with other hypotheses in the scheme of knowledge. Several experiments, again, are better than one. Critical Realism exhibits sound common sense as to the facts of truth. Prof. Pratt, *e.g.*, points out[1] that there are several practical tests of perceptual truth. "Critical realism does not pretend to provide us with a bell that rings when we are right or a whistle that blows when we are wrong." But our senses are *fairly* reliable, it thinks. One can appeal from one sense to another, one appeals to other persons, one sees whether the theory in question works out consistently with the rest of one's experience. And so on.

This is all very admirable. The theory we have put forward describes, more or less inadequately, the nature of knowledge and truth. But it does not provide bells and whistles. The ways of finding out *what* is true are infinitely hard, but most philosophers and scientists have learned something of some of them. There is just one point to be remembered, and it is vital. If knowledge were not transitive, if we were not in direct contact, joined with reality, then all our tests, coherence, correspondence, and the rest, would be worthless. Coherence does not explain our *getting*

[1] *Critical Realism*, p. 106.

through to reality, neither does correspondence ; it leaves the problem at perception. Only knowledge gets through, and it is by virtue of that getting through by mind that the tests of truth have any meaning at all.

§ 5. The Objective and the Subjective Aspects of Knowledge and Truth

(*a*) Knowledge is an act of mind. Truth is essentially the quality of an experience which has two aspects, psychical and ' real,' subjective and objective. The theory of knowledge is concerned with both aspects, with the cognitive process as a whole, but it is possible to stress one side or the other, and the side which is usually stressed is the objective side. The very word ' knowledge ' as opposed to ' knowing ' has in it this bias : where we talk of different kinds of knowledge we usually mean different kinds of objects known, although it is possible to use the word ' knowledge ' differently, as, for example, where philosophers ask one another : " Are History and Science different kinds of knowledge ? "[1] But normally, as we said, it is otherwise : we have ' sense ' knowledge, mathematical knowledge, historical knowledge, sociological knowledge, to which the term ' truth ' is also currently applied. We speak of a ' great historical truth ' meaning the account of an important principle or fact or group of facts in history. There is, also, I think, a kind or class of object which it is very difficult to define, but which deserves to be carefully distinguished from the objects of ' science.' I mean the kind of objects which are dear to the artist, the poet,

[1] *Mind*, October 1922.

the man of religion, the musician. Such things are often regarded by scientists and some philosophers as beyond the region of ' truth ' altogether, as belonging to imagination or fancy, or to a man's own private desires, or to something equally subjective. And yet, on the other hand, we have all, unless there is something stunted or deformed in our nature, a reverence for the poet and the seer and the creator, which we should not feel if we believed them to be merely fanciful eccentrics. There is testimony to this in the very use of the objective word ' truth.' We talk of ' poetic ' truth and ' religious ' truth. I propose in my next chapter to say a very little about these. In the meantime let us remember when discussing ' propositional ' truth that objects of another sort than those of science do exist, laying a powerful hold on men's thoughts and desires.

(β) The psychical side of the cognitive process has, as we remarked, been much less stressed in epistemology than the objective side, but it is not, therefore, unimportant. Personal character is both the effect and the cause of the kinds of knowledge in which a man has interests. It is the effect because the man tends to become like that which he loves. It is commonly enough remarked that the sensualist becomes bestial, the money-grubber worm-like, but the same is obviously true of what can more properly be called spheres of knowledge. The mathematician, the physical scientist, the sociologist, the historian, become, as a rule, moulded into types. Far more prominent is this effect in the case of devotees of what I may call, loosely, the ' higher ' truths. Your saint and your great creative artist is unmistakable even although, like Swinburne, he wears the most con-

ventional of frock-coats, or unlike Swinburne, his tonsure is of the most faultless kind. These things are obvious, they need no emphasis. On the other side there is the effect upon his views of a man's character and taste, particularly in a theoretical speculative subject like philosophy, which prompted Bradley to the remark that " Metaphysics is the finding of bad reasons for what we believe upon instinct, but to find these reasons is no less an instinct." [1]

(7) All we have said of knowledge equally applies to truth. Especially is the effect of the object matter of knowledge upon the seeker after truth noticeable in the contrasting effects upon the scientist and upon, say, the artist. The analytical, impersonal, detached attitude necessary for the exact scientist, influences his attitude to things other than science. For the artist, on the other hand, truth, although grounded in the objective, is an intensely personal affair : it is not cold objectivity that is presented to us, but reality seeming to burn like a flame before the eyes of a prophet. Not without significance do we speak of Shakespearean truth, of Turnerian sunsets, even, for he was no mere intellectualist, of Pauline theology. These were truths, the living vision of living men.

During the rest of this chapter we shall be concerned with the meaning of propositional truth, the ' kind ' that can be expressed in ' S is P ' form. All truth, *qua* truth, is in its essence the same, the quality or character of mind knowing reality, penetrating its lesser and its greater secrets ; but the ways of knowledge throw light on the ways of truth, as I said. For though truth, *qua* truth, is all one, it is, on the other hand, always the character of a concrete act

[1] *Appearance and Reality*, Preface, xiv.

of knowing a particular kind of object, and therefore is specific as well as generic.

(δ) Notice that though 'cold' and apparently impersonal, even scientific truth with all its objectivity is no less the expression of a mind. The coldest scientific truth expressed in the most impersonal proposition was once the living discovery of a live man, just as 'artistic' truth is. The parallel between the two in this respect is seen in the fact that we speak, *e.g.*, of 'Newtonian hypothesis,' 'Röntgen rays,' 'Brownian movement.' This is of course a kind of testimony to great men, but it is also symbolic of the personal aspect in the nature of all truth. In these cases it is very clearly seen, in trivial cases such as 'a fountain pen needs to be filled periodically' the proposition is so general and impersonal that it seems to have little connection with any mind.

There is always a minimum of connection, however. If a proposition had no connection with *any* mind at any time, then it would not be, properly speaking, a proposition, but a collection of meaningless sounds. Propositions must have a minimum of meaning and meaning must be meant by a mind. Without a comprehending, meaning mind, there is no truth or falsity.

§ 6. Analysis of Truth and Error

(*a*) I wish now to analyse as briefly and as clearly as I can the conditions which it is necessary to fulfil that a cognitive act expressed in propositional form may be called 'true,' and the distinction between a 'true' proposition and a 'false' one. Earlier in this chapter we stated that all cognitive acts true *or* false

are in direct contact with independent reality. What, then, can be their differentia? Our theory will be fatally condemned if it cannot explain error.

I shall have in mind in this chapter principally perceptual or empirical or 'practical' truth, not the precise truth of physical science. Examples of perceptual truth and error bring out its general nature in quite a satisfactory way.

(β) One more remark. It seems to me a mistake to think of error as a terribly serious problem which is quite distinct from the theory of truth.[1] Plato's *Theatetus* set that fashion in supposing that error somehow lay in a state between being and not being. It was a serious problem enough for the Greeks. But I do not see why we should be overawed by it as some philosophers[2] of the present century appear to have been. The solution of the problem of error ought to follow from the solution of the problem of truth. To regard error as in a separate category altogether is to involve oneself in artificial assumptions.

(γ) To elucidate our account of the character of truth and error, let us return to our old example of the Smith-Jones dispute about a light on the horizon. Neglecting, as is our purpose, the precise physical nature of ships and stars, there are, it may be remembered, three distinct factors involved, the real existing complex fact of the ship in its environment, the part of the complex fact which appears to Smith and Jones alike, namely the ship's light, and finally Smith's and Jones' different apprehensions and interpretation of that light. Now, Smith's judgment that it is the light of a ship is true just because 'it,' the light, is in fact

[1] H. Wildon Carr, *The Problem of Truth*, p. 76.
[2] *E.g.* Bradley, *Appearance and Reality*, 2nd ed. p. 186.

so related to a real ship. Smith's judgment is the apprehension of a complex fact light-belonging-to-ship, a part of which fact, namely the light, is given both to Jones and Smith.

Jones' judgment, on the other hand, is false, because, although Jones thinks of a real star, and not of some image made of psychical stuff, as giving off the real light that both Smith and Jones perceive, his thought is not an apprehension of the existing present complex fact of light-belonging-to-ship, a part of which fact is now presented both to Smith and Jones.

The world of Fact is a complex which simply is as it is, and cannot be tangled or literally mixed up by the agency of thought as some realists appear to think possible. That complex Fact, again, presents itself in parts and at different times as what we call things and relations. We see stars and ships and lights and persons, and love, and lights belonging to stars, and lights belonging to ships, and love of a man for a woman and of a woman for a man. They are all as real as can be and we see them as real things and relations. But then to meet it all there comes the unique power which thought has of abstraction, that power seen to advantage in the process of universalising. We can analyse the big Fact, we can think of things apart from their relations and relations apart from their things. In so doing we can 'mix things up,' we can weave the wildest worlds of fancy which convince because the things and persons and relations therein are thought of as real, and the fictitious complex we again think of as belonging to a real world of space and time and green grass and sunshine. This power of abstracting from the real it is which makes some philosophers think falsely that in ideas and

Universals they are dealing with the merest figments of thought, wholly divorced from reality. We have sufficiently pointed out that this is not so.

The application of this to Smith and Jones is simple. Jones and Smith have a complex Fact, containing real things such as lights, stars, ships. Smith and Jones are presented with a given *this* (called, if you want to describe it in general, universal terms, 'a light') for analysis and interpretation. Smith abstracts (the whole process is unconscious and instantaneous) from particulars he has known, the Universals 'belongs to,' and 'ship.' He combines them into a single Universal, 'belongs to a ship.' He then *realises* his Universals by applying them to this particular object, by predicating them to be distributed as particular characters of *this* (light). Jones goes through a similar process, only with 'star' substituted for 'ship.' Smith is right because his thought apprehends a real *complex* part of the real complex Fact, the world, namely light-with-the-character-of-belonging-to-a-ship. Jones is wrong because his judgment, although its elements 'star,' and 'belongs to,' are derived from the real world and find their meaning there again, is not an apprehension of a real *complex* part (I assume for convenience the light, 'this,' to be a simple fact) of the complex Fact, the world, a portion of which, the light, appears now. We must not however fall into Mr. Russell's error. Although Jones does not apprehend a real actually existing complex part of the world as it exists here and now, yet he does not merely, on the other hand, apprehend disjointed facts and relations. He does not think merely of a star, a light, and 'belonging to,' but synthesises them into 'light belonging to a star in the real world.' The real simple undisputed fact of the

light is apprehended directly by both Jones and Smith. This is the relevant fact to be interpreted, the subject of the complex judgment which is going to be true or false according as it apprehends complex existing reality surrounding the given fact here and now. As to which is right Smith and Jones can test that by the 'correspondence' method of hiring a swift steam launch and hieing them to the problematic light, or they can employ the cheaper coherence method of calculating whether astronomical laws permit of a bright star being just there at that time. Or, best of all, they can combine the methods of coherence and correspondence,[1] of hypothesis and experiment, by saying 'if that's a ship it ought to be moving on rapidly,' and then, 'let's wait and see if it does.'

(δ) The same general principle should hold good in other cases, truth being always just the quality of knowledge apprehending a part of complex reality as it is. The question as to how error arises can be seen by considering Jones' implications. In the above case it is Jones' erroneous inference. Error in sense perception may arise through the agency of any or of all the factors which go to form the immediate context. The most important item of all is perhaps the selective activity of the sense organs, transforming for perception primary motions into secondary qualities which as a continuum form the base of all sensuous experience. This of course merely by itself is not erroneous. It is only when we assert that secondary qualities belong to physical reality that the error arises. Apart from sense organs there is on the physical side the distorting influence of media through which the physical processes appear. We are accustomed in sense perception to

[1] See Chap. V. § 8.

locate what is immediately perceived *at* the place from which it now appears, and at the time at which it appears, namely the present. The second of these perceptual habits leads us always into error, more or less slight. In the case of a perceived star, which, we will suppose, has years ago gone out into nothingness or thin vapour, the perceptual error is serious. The distorting illusionary effect of the media of space and time (or space-time) is great. The 'star' which 'appears' now is no longer; if it were it would not be 'there' but millions of miles away from where it seems. Judgments based directly upon perception, of course, do not allow for these things, they identify the physical light now perceived with the star from which it emanated. Another example of distortion of appearance by medium is the celebrated stick which appears bent when half immersed in water. We combated before the kind of notion that there is any 'datum' or 'sensum' which is bent: the stick because it appears half through one medium, air, and half through another, water, appears therefore bent. Naïve persons at once jump to the conclusion that the object is bent, whereas it is really the ('real,' physical) rays of light from the stick which are bent, and so the stick appears so. Physiological and psychical influences account for other kinds of error and illusion. Physiological disturbances aided no doubt by psychical history produce delusions as those of delirium tremens. On the purely psychical side the phenomenon of suggestion might be cited as capable of producing error and illusion.

(ε) In all these cases truth is the quality of knowledge which is originally (although now it may be expressed in impersonal propositional form) an act of

mind efficiently apprehending a complex reality as it is, the apprehension taking place by the application of a predicate to a subject, a 'this,' which is given for analysis. Falsity is the quality of an originally cognitive act which applies a predicate to a given 'this' or subject, forming a judgment or proposition which is not the apprehension of the complex fact attached to the given 'this.' Even false cognitive judgments have as their constituents apprehended real facts and real relations wrongly arranged or wrongly applied but still in rearranged form thought of as belonging to reality. That we can thus ideally re-shuffle 'reals' is simply an ultimate power of the mind.

CHAPTER IX

NON-PROPOSITIONAL TRUTH

§ 1. *Introduction.*—(α) Usual view that propositional knowledge the only kind ; relation of propositions to mind forgotten. (β) Even if not forgotten, propositions *themselves* cannot fully express truth, but must be supplemented by feeling of wholes. (γ) But though propositions presuppose felt wholeness, they do not *express* it. Is there any other way of *expressing* wholeness ? (δ) Expressions in art may do so. Difficulties.

§ 2. *Art and truth.*—(α) The double fact of man's organic unity with, and distinction from, reality. (β) The aesthetic emotion is (as opposed to abstract science) an intense inner experience of reality. Art expresses reality in its *internal* relations. (γ) Though art chosen here as example, conduct too should be inner expressiveness. (δ) Assertion and expression contrasted. All truth is a function of mind (at least) and usually involves *some* kind of 'expression.' (ε) But artistic symbolism is more expressive than propositional assertion.

§ 3. *The nature of aesthetic experience.*—(α) The wholeness which art symbolises is not a mere particular, but a universal whole, stimulating the peculiar aesthetic emotion. (β) Example analysed. (γ) That description of experience not exaggerated corroborated by quoting mystics and poets.

§ 4. *The criterion of the truth of art.*—(α) Art can be true, but there is, as with science, no ready-made criterion. Anyhow it must be the truth of feeling. (β) If this is so, the test cannot be correspondence. Representationism rejected. (γ) The only test can be the aesthetic quality, the peculiar inner coherence, of complex feeling itself. (δ) This is manifest in the infinitely various concrete expressions of art. Various kinds of falsity in art.

§ 5. *Possible criticisms considered.*—(α) No apology for metaphor. Stace's general attack on intuition, rapture, etc., misplaced. Mystic experience is not philosophy, but philosophy is poorer if it ignores it, and only metaphors can describe it, or better, 'express' it. (β) Objection that to speak of truth of feeling is a mere analogy. Answer : truth is not property of thought solely *or* of feeling, but of knowledge in broadest sense. The relation of feeling to knowledge at the lower and the higher levels. In conclusion, aesthetic feeling is highly cognitive, and therefore capable

of being true or false. And once again, its truth *is* its inner expressiveness of aesthetic harmony.

§ 6. *Conclusion.*—Beauty, knowledge, and truth.

§ 1. Introduction

(*a*) Throughout this volume we have been mainly, almost entirely, concerned with the truth of the kind of knowledge which can be expressed in propositional form. Judging from what is usually written about truth it looks as if the general opinion was that propositions, the expression of judgments, are the only sort of knowledge to which the term truth can properly apply. The judgment of perception or the universal scientific judgment are usually taken to be the main types, an examination of which is supposed to discover the nature of all truth. Certainly it is useful to examine these, for they are the most explicit, representative, and clearly defined types, and being of such clear-cut nature it is easy to estimate their limits, and so to discover fairly precisely just what is the character of their truth or falsity.

But the preoccupation with perceptual and scientific matters frequently, as I said, leads those who offer theories of truth to assume that these are the only kinds of knowledge. Science and philosophy themselves are syntheses, it is supposed, of these sorts of judgments, and that being so, why should we look further? Knowledge is conceived as an arrangement, a coherent arrangement, of propositions, which is there, self-sufficient, all (if such an arrangement of propositions could be extended and completed) which is required to constitute perfect and complete knowledge, standing out as a system independent and by itself.

But to think in this way is to ignore the parenthood of propositions, it is to take the concretions which knowledge forms in the process of its living activity as adequate to express that life. It is not so. Propositions which are true have, of course, an objectivity which makes them comprehensible, and so to that extent expressive, to all intelligent minds. But it is just because propositions are the expressions originally of a mind faced with reality, and because other minds like it are fitted to comprehend that reality, that the proposition by itself seems itself universally expressive. If we attach it not to this mind nor that, it is because the truth of it, as expressed in universal symbols, words, is sufficiently realised by all intelligent minds.

(β) Taking this for granted, another question arises. It is, can the proposition, and can the system of propositions, adequately express truth? It may be remembered that those who hold the coherence theory deny that truth can adequately be expressed in propositional form, because of the abstractness of propositions. Full truth is for them Absolute Experience for which the particular (if it can be said to remain) is invested with Universal Meaning. We overcame to a certain extent that difficulty by distinguishing particular, abstract, truths from the Whole Truth, the Universe expressing itself in pieces from the Universe expressing itself in wholeness, and we said that because there is room in reality for each of these phases, that particular truth could be in its own sphere quite true. The question now arises, must we, even if we admit the particular truths of particular propositions, be content with these and their syntheses into systems as the sole means of expressing truth? We may be inclined to ask for something more. The poverty of pro-

positional truth by itself is frequently complained of, as being food without sustenance. Can added propositions and combined propositions fully express the truth of reality? It would appear not. Reality is "not strung along in a chain simply because true beliefs are linked together chainwise," as Prof. Laird says.[1] But on the other hand, if truth is not adequately expressed in a chain of propositions, how do we come to *know* that there is a reality not strung along in a chain? Truth must involve something other than propositions. The only answer, and the perfectly obvious one, can be that we experience wholes through sensation long before we make explicit judgments about their separate qualities (though knowledge of any sort above the feeling-level involves some sort of discrimination which immediately tends, as we saw, to break out into explicit judgments), and that it is the immediately felt whole which for us becomes enriched and illumined by our judgments upon it. Thus perception is the distinction of many in one felt whole. There is a mental background of feeling (though it is always feeling of an object) into which all qualities as judged, sink. 'Appercipience' is the activity which unifies and fuses 'pieces' of knowledge so that they become living expressions of a single whole, and feeling (on the subjective side) is the furnace in which it fuses. On the objective side, the felt experience of an object, in reality, is prior to, though ever enriched by, the strings of predicates which we discern in it.

(γ) Propositions are indispensable weapons of knowledge, then, because they throw ever fresh lights upon what appeared, to begin with, little more than a

[1] *A Study in Realism*, p. 92.

blind felt whole. Nevertheless they are themselves very inadequate expressions of truth, not merely because they are piece-meal, for reality in certain aspects *is* piece-meal, as we saw, but because, although they presuppose unity in the objects of knowledge, they do not in themselves express that unity, but take it for granted. It is the old difficulty of the wood and the trees. The man who trusts in propositions alone to bring him to truth may completely miss, in his pre-occupation with parts, the significance of the whole, particularly if that whole is of a higher sort than one of mere aggregation. Propositions can only be summed and synthesised into syllogisms, and the man who takes them for more than they are worth is likely to take reality as the mere heap or the mere syllogistic synthesis which it is not. This is often admitted, and the need of imagination, of a wholeness of outlook for the man of science, is frequently pointed out. But even if we grant all this, we still have to ask, is the 'intellectual imagination' *all* that is required? May there not be aspects of reality, integrally constituting it, which are not expressible in propositional form, and may there not be forms of expression other than the formal proposition, which, intrinsically, in themselves, do give a clue at least to the truth which is not merely a sum or combination of propositions, but which is itself the single experience of wholes of reality, and, perhaps, in its perfection, of the Whole of Reality?

(δ) I am referring to the experiences of reality which are expressed in the language of religion and poetry, in colour and in the solid form of sculpture, in dancing and in music. I am aware of the unorthodoxy of introducing such subjects in a thesis on truth, but I am altogether convinced that, however difficult it is to

show the relation of such experiences to truth, nothing is to be gained and very much indeed is to be lost, by neglecting them and concentrating only upon the truths of propositions. It is, I think, by no mere analogy that artistic expression is said to be *true* as well as beautiful. Before proceeding, however, I may add that I am acutely aware of the very wide area of the ground I am now about to trespass upon. I can in no measure do justice to the truth which is discovered through experience of beauty or religion. To explore such ground thoroughly would be to attack the ultimate questions of the reality and relation of the values. The thorough exploration of the aesthetic factor itself would involve the making of a very careful analysis of the forms and technique and methods of each type of art, in order to show the character of its particular sort of expressiveness, just as in logic we study different kinds of judgments. This, of course, I cannot do here : I can only throw out very general suggestions as to the function of art and religion (particularly art) as forms of human experience. I therefore here entitle the following few pages upon a difficult subject, ' suggestions.'

§ 2. Art and Truth

(*a*) Prof. Baillie's main theme in his *Studies in Human Nature* is that truth is but one way in which the mind seeks fulfilment, and that if ' full truth ' of mind is to be reached, it must be approached from all sides, and not merely from one side, of our nature. It is this theme which I should like, in imperfect fashion, to improvise upon. If the answer to the question ' what is truth ' is to be given, thinks Prof. Baillie, it can only be given in terms different from,

and wider than, intellectual truth itself. Otherwise we should be begging the question. To believe this, we may add, is to take truth with the seriousness it deserves: it is to take truth and the desire for truth in their deepest metaphysical sense, and to explain them by describing their function in man who has a place in the cosmos. Man is "set in the midst of an infinite universe," he is a part of it yet is an independent being within it, and is so far distinct from it; in this twofold character the key to his deepest nature is to be found. *Qua* distinct from it, *qua* self-conscious, he is ever seeking a reunion through the instrumentality of the mind. *Qua* a part of reality and yet self-conscious, he can experience in his inmost being the thrill of intimate communion. Communion is the relation of at least two: love is the desire for more perfect communion, and perfect love craves fuller knowledge of the loved. That is why men speak of the love of truth and beauty as a passion: it is a hungering for union with and full understanding of the beloved who is near enough to be loved, who is far enough off and lovely enough to whet desire.

(*β*) To attain the desire of a truth which is the outcome of man's distinction from the world, it is necessary for man to penetrate those channels which link man to the same world. Truth must be discovered from within as well as from without. Science, as we have seen, is abstract, it assumes the distinctness of knower and known as well as the distinctness of this, that, or the other known object. The procedure of science essentially involves the assumption of external relations, and it is only because feeling unconsciously supplements it, as we saw, that the artificiality of the scientific attitude does not appear

more obviously. It is because wholes have been experienced, and because judgments which emerge in propositions are themselves assertions of experiences, that propositional truths have real significance. The aesthetic emotion, on the other hand, which may be aroused on perceiving any of the forms of art, is a highly vivid experience of the aesthetic object, in which the peculiar inner wholeness and harmony of the object is directly felt to a much higher degree than is the case when we perceive chairs and tables and other articles of use. The artist himself, by a process not understood, is in his turn expressing in his art some aesthetic experience of unity, which may be ' integration at the feeling-level,' [1] but which cannot obviously enough be precisely the same as the experience of the aesthete who enjoys the concrete physical creation, since the creation, for the artist, is not yet created. It is simpler to take the aesthete's experience of the art-product than the artist's experience, and we shall do so throughout, not implying by this that there is no problem of the artist's experience. But to return. The product of art has in a peculiar way the direct power of suggesting and symbolising living concrete wholeness, though it does much more, as we shall see, and in a manner in which it is not possible for formally arranged successions of logical propositions to do. It is the character of art to express in its own way the whole truth. Artistic expression is an expression of reality in its internal relations, and may therefore be true in a fuller, though in a different, sense from propositional truth.

(γ) I have instanced art as the typical expression of certain profound emotions, and I shall in the main

[1] See, *e.g.*, Lloyd Morgan, *Sectional Address on Psychology*, *Brit. Assoc.*, 1921.

continue to use it as an example, because the conception of 'artistic truth' is not an unfamiliar one, although neglected as a rule by philosophers. But I should like here to say that I do not regard art, in the sense of poetry, painting, etc., as the only adequate means of symbolising wholeness by stimulating rich concrete feeling. I believe that good conduct, if it is to be good in any genuine and vital sense, must be the expression, and the symbolic expression, of a sense of wholeness, of a deep emotion in which superficial differences become fused in essentials, as they become fused in aesthetic emotion. Conduct, I believe, should not be any mere fulfilment of prescribed 'laws,' any external adjustment of means to some end or ideal, but an *expression*, whose *truth* is self-revealing by its inner coherence, harmony, order, and what the Greeks called beauty or goodness indifferently, of the inner harmony of reality felt by man. Goodness as well as beauty can be true. I cannot here make these vague generalities more explicit without entering into detail which would carry me far beyond my allotted space. I have already thrown out hints elsewhere,[1] and I hope in the near future to explore this field more thoroughly. It is better here to confine ourselves to the less unfamiliar notion of artistic truth.

(δ) Before exploring this a little further, let us first simply note the emphasis we have laid on the implied distinction between *statements* or *assertions* in the case of propositions, and *expression* in the case of art, and let us see the community and the difference between 'statements' and 'expression.' Of course this is a somewhat arbitrary use of the terms. For

[1] *E.g. Contemporary Review*, September 1922.

statements or assertions are expressions in a sense. They are, however, *less* expressive of reality, as we shall see, than artistic expression.

Some kind of expression, either propositional or otherwise, is usually regarded as being required if truth is to be truth. Yet this is not absolutely so, and we shall find, when we come to examine higher grades of feeling-experience, such as that in aesthetic experience, that feeling-experience itself can be true or false. On the other hand, it is perfectly true that feeling at the lower level of consciousness, though it is the chief component of a vaguely cognitive experience, can scarcely be said, until it develops into external expression of some sort, to be true or false. *This* feeling in itself is neither true nor false, though the contact with reality is reached through feeling. Truth involves self-consciousness, the distinction of self from the reality which is known, and an ideal re-realisation of that reality through the medium of the self. This re-realisation is a translation into terms of my experience, it issues normally in some kind of active expression by me, and it is this expression which is normally called true or false. The world is, at the outset, discovered through feeling-experience, which is the raw material for truth; but there must follow upon this felt awareness, firstly, the distinction between the feeling and the reality felt ; secondly, the development of the felt content by analysis, involving judgments and propositions ; and thirdly, the criticism, or, as it were, the auditing, of these analytic accounts of mine. As my discovery of reality, truth is peculiarly *mine* : as mine it must bear upon its expression the influence of my peculiar mental background, it must ' flavour ' of my personality ; and again, on the other hand, it

must be my interpretation of the objective. We saw in our last chapter how the relation between the expression of truth and personality varies, and appears very much more intimate in some classes of truths (*e.g.* Shakespearean truths) than others (*e.g.* 'fountain pens need to be filled periodically').[1]

Having made clear then that truth (as a rule, though not in all kinds of experience) involves above mere feeling some sort of assertiveness or expression, and that these vary in their relationship to individual minds; or better, that the double feeling of unity with and difference from reality awakens, as its natural outcome, into self-conscious expression or assertion, let us now proceed to mark the difference between what I have called assertion and what I have called expression, chiefly by describing the latter. We remarked before that both, of course, are in a sense 'expressions.'

(ε) But there the similarity ends. Although propositions involve words, and words are usually called *symbols*, these symbols in common speech have lost much of their symbolic value, and are really more signs or signals than symbols. To symbolise, which is one of the functions of art, is a very much more intimate process. Propositions use words which *point* to, and are the signals for, things, or clearly labelled general facts, or clear cut aspects, or relations, of facts. Words point to things and adjectives, one by one, and so treat the things and adjectives as if they were in completely external relations. Artistic expression, on the other hand, works not by pointing to things or their qualities, but by *suggesting* or *symbolising* in subtle ways their wholeness and inner

[1] See Chap. VIII. § 5 (γ).

coherence. It may do this by imitation, as, for example, when sound suggests 'meaning' in poetry, but imitation is only one and a somewhat superficial means of suggestion and symbolism, and the resources of art are known only to the artist's intuition, and afterwards to the critic who is able to find out and describe some of them. Imitation has, however, as is well known, played a prominent part in the development of language, which originally was expressive where it is now merely narrative or signalising.

We have just said that art symbolises wholes, that it expresses things as they are in their internal relations, as opposed to formal propositions which are concerned with the more partial and abstract. It is, however, high time to describe more fully the nature and the significance of the wholes which art symbolises. For it might with justice be said that propositions deal with parts and qualities which can legitimately be regarded *as* wholes. Or to put the criticism the opposite way, it might be said that the wholes that art symbolises are just as partial and abstract as any other wholes, and that therefore the truth which art professes is in that respect no different from 'logical' truth.

§ 3. The Nature of Aesthetic Experience

(*a*) If artistic truth began and ended by pointing to or even by symbolising and expressing the wholeness of this or that individual thing or group of things, the criticism might be true. But although art expresses itself by creating wholes which are finite (*e.g.* a picture), and although it frequently seems (painting is again a good example) to *imitate* limited

wholes which are finite, thus giving rise to the mistaken idea that the sole essence of art is representation, yet the inner meaning of art's symbolism is that the wholes which it creates express in their nature a wider and more universal whole than themselves. The way in which they do this is difficult to describe shortly without vagueness or inaccuracy, for again we are faced with the complicated problem of symbolism and its methods in art. But briefly it may be said to be something as follows. The wholes which are the expression of artistic truth are so constructed that they stimulate through sensuous and ideal channels, the intense feeling which characterises the experience (I think the experience as a whole may justly be called an ' emotion ') which we call aesthetic. The ideal element may borrow its effect by representing some sublime or inspiring object, or it may suggest such object or objects by a subtle use of association. The sensuous element is of immense, and in some sorts (*e.g.* music) of almost exclusive importance. The ' art ' in any art is just the skill to arrange sensuous material in such a harmonious way that the perception of these as a complex whole arouses a highly pleasurable emotion, very concrete in character, which, however, is different from the emotion which we might conceivably experience in perceiving, say, a complete pig, in that it is impersonal, universal, in that it transcends the mere individual and becomes, curiously enough, an emotion of the concrete wholeness and harmony of the universe. I do not mean that a picture or a symphony or a poem are respectively photographs or sounds or descriptions of the universe. I mean that the picture and the symphony and the poem, somehow or other, each

in their own unique way, stimulate in me an emotion in which I seem to be carried, by means of, and through, this concrete object beyond the mere finite and the accidental, and to feel the universal, throbbing, as it were, within me. Perceiving this or that aesthetic object I am brought into focus with reality, and in a strange and almost indescribable way feel within me the universal harmony.

(β) The details as to how such a thing happens are, as I said, if they are really fully understood at all, beyond the scope of this work. But take as a single example a piece of sculpture, say the gracious figure of Demeter from Knidos. Striking first of all is the subject of the figure, gracious, dignified, massive, maternal, the mother of fruitfulness. It is, however, the expression, the 'feeling in stone' for balancing rhythms, which stirs the aesthetic attitude proper. The curves and masses on opposite sides of the centre line are not symmetrical (though not so unsymmetrical as many other examples one might choose) but they are balanced, in technical terms, 'composed.' The perception of these balanced masses involves the stimulation of nascent motor impulses which (man being a bi-symmetrical organism) in their turn are balanced against one another, giving rise to 'aesthetic repose,' the repose of tension rather than of relaxation. The mental experience of this harmonious or balanced complex of perceptual impulses it is which has a strong affective tone, which is highly pleasurable, the whole felt experience being justly, as we said, termed an emotion. So far we have a crude summary of the psycho-physical aspects of the affair, and many would hold this aspect to be the whole of the aesthetic experience proper. If we take the term 'aesthetic'

etymologically, perhaps it is so. I should go further, however, and while admitting that the aesthetic experience must always involve this peculiar concrete sensuous experience of a certain kind of object, I should add that the experience itself is an experience of perfection, of perfect wholeness, such as is never experienced in our ordinary practical relations with things. The aesthetic attitude is essentially contemplative and non-practical, and in it we seem (if it be intense) to be for a moment carried beyond the limits of space and temporal existence altogether. The emotion is impersonal, is objective, we seem to be lifted out of ourselves, as it were, we transcend the accidental, and endure, in a moment of almost intolerable joy, the perfect life of the Universe. It is this highly emotional experience of universality which is so important for the highest truth, as I hope to show.

(γ) I do not think that I am in any way exaggerating in my account of this experience. It can be corroborated anywhere in the language of the mystics, perhaps more so among these even than in the writings of poets. Meister Eckhart speaks of "sinking away from selfhood into the self-possession of God." Tagore says, "At the immortal touch of thy hands my little heart loses its limits in joy and gives birth to utterance ineffable."[1] "When thou commandest me to sing it seems that my heart would break with pride. . . . All that is harsh and dissonant in my life melts into one sweet harmony,"[2] or "I . . . will stand in the overflowing solitude where all things are seen as by their creator."[3] Of the poets, Wordsworth's direct experience, through beauty,

[1] *Gitanjali*, 1. [2] *Ibid.* 2. [3] *Fruit-gathering*, XXI.

> . . . I have felt
> A presence that disturbs me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts, a sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man ;
> A motion and a spirit, that impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things. . . .

Keats's *Nightingale*, or Shelley's

> I seem as in a trance sublime and strange
> To muse on my own separate fantasy,
> My own, my human mind, which passively
> Now renders and receives fast influencings,
> Holding an unremitting interchange
> With the clear universe of things around : . . .

sing all of them, of this self-same experience. And to cite the mystics as well as the poets, is not, I think, to confuse the mystic with the aesthetic experience. The aesthetic experience, if consummated, always has, I incline to believe, its mystic side. But the chief difference between them appears to lie in the fact that while the complete mystical experience involves a complete loss of the sense of self, a swooning into the blankness of the Universal, the aesthetic experience is, on the other hand, concrete, it is an intense experience of universality through this concrete complex aesthetic object, and is focussed there. The aesthetic experience still remains sensuous, even although it transcends the sensuous. I have no space here to distinguish between sensuous and ideal beauty and what they have in common, nor to notice the difference between the sense of beauty in nature, such as Wordsworth and Shelley describe, and that in art, although I believe

there to be important differences. What we are mainly concerned with is the expressive character of art as the symbol of felt universal truth. If we seem to have stressed the experience of beauty rather than the forms of art itself, it is because the aim of art is firstly, to express the universal harmony felt through the particular, which we call beauty, and secondly, to reproduce in others, so far as possible, the concrete inner experience of the artist as expressed in the creation.

§ 4. The Criterion of the Truth of Art

(*a*) If art be the expression through sense of felt universal truth, and we are asked, what is the criterion of this truth, the question is not altogether easy to answer. Just as in the realm of thought, so in art, there is no superficial and obvious brand of genuineness: the mistakes of the greatest critics are well known. Yet, on the other hand, it is freely admitted that art is more than subjective, that it involves standards, that it is not the mere whimsical outpourings of this individual's feelings, or that. The feeling which art expresses can be genuine, true, and therefore, because true, valid: or it can be spurious and false. Again, the expression of such feeling may be adequate or otherwise. The question as to what we mean by asking ' what is the truth of art ' depends on whether we are referring to the felt experience which is expressed in this or that concrete form, or to the successfulness of the expression. The latter is the sphere of art criticism in the proper sense (or is this an unduly narrow interpretation ?) ; the validity and truth of the feeling-experience itself, either as experienced by the artist or by the man who contemplates

his work and re-experiences his feeling, is our proper interest here.

(β) If we take art thus as the expression of feeling it must be obvious at once that the test cannot be 'correspondence.' It is only if we take works of art (as we take propositions) in the most superficial and artificial sense that we can possibly imagine that its function is merely to imitate, or copy, or 'represent.' The representative fallacy in art, particularly in the visual arts and a little less so in poetry and music, is of all fallacies the commonest (even among those who ought to know better) and the most shallow. 'Holding the mirror to nature' is the most gratuitous insult ever offered to art, and the misconception underlying it seems of all the hardest to get rid of. It is exactly parallel to the fallacies of representative perception and representative conception in the intellectual world, against which we have fought so strenuously. But its influence upon the popular mind, has, as is natural, been far more insidious, and has reduced art to the function of providing potted landscapes of a suitable size for the parlour wall. I am not denying that art, particularly painting, does represent, and that it is not too noble for any parlour wall. But I do deny that photography of any sort is its chief end, and that there is any virtue, except convenience, in the multiplication by two of fair faces and pleasant scenes. Pleasant indeed they are, but they are not art. Art is reality as the artist perceives, feels, experiences it, but that is vastly different from reality seen in a mirror by the eyes of you or me.

(γ) If art then is an expression of feeling, and it is absurd to suppose that 'correspondence' can test the truth of the experience expressed, the only test left is

experience itself, felt experience of the kind we described as aesthetic experience. The only test of true feeling is feeling itself. If it is the aesthetic experience proper, if it exhibits the feeling of internal concrete coherence which belongs to beauty, then it is, by reason of that, true in its own way, and is its own justification. If the artist's experience is such that in his ecstasy he can put such very life into the dead stuff of clay, or paint, or sound, or movement, so that he who sees it and has perception acute enough, feels again through the experience of the art-creation the universal pulses within him, then is the experience of beauty in both artist and aesthete a true experience and its expression adequate. Experience, many experiences of this kind, are the only tests of the eternal everlasting truth of great art, of whatever type it may be.

(δ) The types, of course, are many and various. Reality expresses itself through mind in an infinity of ways, and in no sphere is this expression carried out more perfectly and with more variety than in the sphere of art. Milton on his blindness, the Ode on Immortality, the Sistine Madonna, Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, all carry us out to reality in their own unique ways. Reality is rich enough for the rediscovery of it in infinite media by infinite multitudes of minds each with its own peculiar independent quality. Falsity of artistically expressed experience, on the other hand, means inner disharmony or disproportion, pretence to universal expression which is not carried out. False art stirs jarring, incoherent, false feelings. Sentimentality in art, for example, is a morbid emphasis on, and introspective enjoyment of, feelings merely for their own sake. It misses the impersonality and

objectivity of great art. Decadence, an undue emphasis on the sensuous forms of art, combined with a lack of grip of the reality which art should express, is a more refined form of sentimentality. Artificiality is simply the failure to get ' right down ' to reality in intense experience. There are, of course, other failures of expression in art which are, as we said, more the subject matter of the technical critic.

§ 5. Possible Criticisms considered

(*a*) I cannot but help feeling again and again that I shall be accused of impropriety in introducing in an epistemological essay the subject of art and its truth. I shall be accused in the first place of committing the unforgivable sin of introducing much metaphor ; then, of confusing feeling, which is just feeling, and cannot be true or false, with thought which is true or false ; and finally, as the result of these, I shall be accused of confusing beauty with truth.

As regards the use of metaphor I make no apology at all. Its use has a very good precedent in the very great philosopher Plato. I think those are right who interpret his use of metaphor as an attempt to suggest, not what is ' higher than reason ' (for that is a meaningless phrase when examined) but what the language of syllogistic reason is unable fully to describe. I should say that this must always be the function of metaphors, which belong to art rather than to philosophy. By offering metaphors I have been living up to the theory that propositional truths need sometimes to be supplemented. Statements like " philosophy is founded upon reason. . . . Therefore it cannot admit anything higher than reason. To exalt intuition,

ecstasy, or rapture, above thought—this is death to philosophy," [1] or " symbolism is the mark of an infirm mind," [2] have a modicum of truth in them, but exhibit a confusion. Certainly philosophy is founded upon reason in the sense that it is ' an unusually obstinate attempt to think clearly ' and reasonably. This being so, philosophy naturally cannot accept intuition, ecstasy, rapture, as a *substitute* for reason. But why *oppose* the one to the other? Intuition, ecstasy, rapture, at which Mr. Stace so sneers throughout his book, are unquestionably real experiences, even though Mr. Stace has no acquaintance with them, and you cannot abolish them by any '*therefore* philosophy cannot admit anything higher than reason.' If philosophy with its syllogisms shuts its eyes to the existence of any sort of experience whatsoever, however it may explain it, then so much the worse for philosophy. Prejudice never yet made for truth. The mystics, to whom Mr. Stace is referring, may have been, indeed they were, bad philosophers, but they were good mystics, and their described experience itself is a contribution to truth, even if it can only be described in metaphor. Your philosopher who refuses to believe that there is reality in what he has never experienced, and may possibly be incapable of experiencing, is a poorer philosopher for his lack of sympathy, and he has, of course, simply no right to judge. He cannot hope to be ' a synoptic man.' Even the philosopher who is more tolerant and sympathetic, but who has no direct experience of mystical or aesthetic experience, is so far less of a philosopher. The richer and deeper the individual experience, the

[1] W. T. Stace, *A Critical History of Greek Philosophy*, p. 377.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 12.

better the materials for the philosophic edifice. Every philosophic man is the better philosopher for having *lived*, and without it his metaphysical games of chess are more worthless than the paper they are played upon. If we have used metaphor, then, to describe an experience transcendent and unordinary in its nature, it is not because the metaphor is thought to be a substitute for philosophy any more than is the experience itself. But the experience is a fact, to describe it requires metaphor, and to ignore the experience because it is unusual, and to deny that it may yield insight into truth of its own kind, is to be philosophically close-minded.

(β) Still the objection haunts us, that we have been describing feelings and not truth. Truth, it will be said again, is the prerogative of science and philosophy, and to talk of artistic truth is metaphorical and an analogy.

But truth as I have taken it, what Prof. Baillie calls 'full truth' is not a property of thought or intellect solely, or of feeling, but of knowledge in a very broad sense, knowledge which is a whole mind's apprehension and interpretation of reality. All knowledge involves feeling at its higher and lower limits, and thought everywhere is the supplement of feeling. Feeling at its lower levels is the primary and elementary mode[1] of cognitive experience; discrimination, comparison, and, later, intellectual analysis and synthesis, help, as we saw, to enrich and illumine the confused but never contentless nor quite blank masses of the felt object. And as feeling in the form of sensation is the pioneer

[1] I do not imply anywhere in this chapter that feeling is ever *separate* from cognition and conation. When I speak of 'feeling,' by itself, I only mean that it may be sometimes the predominant character of a whole experience.

here in the realm of perception, so is higher and more complex feeling, such as aesthetic feeling, the pioneer in the spheres of knowledge, in which man can discriminate but little as yet, of which he has small intellectual comprehension. Of course, as a concrete piece of expression, the work of art involves discriminative perception of the highest sort. A necessary part of the artist's equipment as of the connoisseur's is the ability to perceive acutely the subtlest variations and arrangements of sensuous material. If there is a *feeling* of the aesthetic unity, it is a feeling suffused with discriminating perceptual (as opposed to reflective) thought. The critic's perception is probably enriched by reflective thought as well. On the other hand, the essence of the aesthetic whole is not, as we saw, its mere physical existence, but its intrinsic value as a symbol for cosmic or universal feeling. Now this universal feeling is feeling of the higher sort which is the pioneer of what is, as yet anyhow, and is perhaps for ever, inaccessible for analytic thought. Thought may reflect upon and analyse the aesthetic experiences, gaining valuable grist for its mills thereby, learning that there are values as well as facts in reality, and that the Whole may be quite other than what a materialist thinks it to be. But thought, although it works upon and so enriches, these experiences of wholes which feeling gives to it, cannot itself, dealing as it does with things and their truths in external relations, attain the wholeness of truth which aesthetic feeling gives. I do not mean to imply that feeling alone is cognitive and experiential, and that thought merely shuffles and arranges ideas. Both thought and feeling are experiential and cognitive, and it is for this very reason that both are capable of being true or false. Only,

feeling is primary and direct experience of wholes (or in the aesthetic experience, a whole which flavours of universality), whilst thought, though it returns (*e.g.* in perception) to reality, is itself secondary, analytic, reflective, and indirect, and being ideal, takes experience in parts rather than as wholes.

There are, then, two sides to the question of the truth of feeling. Firstly, aesthetic feeling is highly cognitive, and therefore *can* be true or false. Secondly, its truth *is* its personal inner expressiveness of aesthetic universal harmony, and is its own intrinsic criterion. In this sense, and this only, can the feeling of beauty be true.

§ 6. Conclusion

Aesthetic experience discovers no fact but the fact of the intrinsic value of beauty. It makes no direct contribution to the sciences or philosophy, but, as well as providing data for them, it stimulates and encourages thereby that wholeness and sanity and perspective without which philosophy fails to be adequate. All experience may be, because partial and belonging to finite purposive beings, in a sense abstract. But there are degrees of abstractness, and the fundamental difference between the aesthetic experience and thought is just the greater concreteness of the one and the greater abstractness of the other. Man, as we saw, is himself part of the life of Reality, and yet is able to distinguish himself from her. But there are degrees of self-distinction, and degrees of unity with reality. In thought, we distinguish clearly between our thinking and the things thought of, so much so that correspondence seems to many minds the truest account of truth. In all feeling, on the other hand, there is less

of conscious self-distinction than in thought : in the aesthetic experience our intense emotion is so organic to the concrete object that we seem to be one with it and it in its turn seems to partake of our very life.

It is good, then, that in the aesthetic experience man, and above all men, the philosopher, should through intense felt inner experience, ' get down ' to the reality, should, by living reality, know for himself with no uncertainty that there is value and inner harmony there. If two of the most experienced of contemporary philosophers can say, the one[1] with Wordsworth, that poetry is ' the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge,' or with Yeats, that ' whatever of philosophy has been made poetry is alone permanent,' and the other[2] that he takes more and more as literal fact what he used to love and admire as poetry, then it cannot surely be altogether wrong to suppose that beauty yields truth, and that without some experience of it knowledge and truth must be but as a heap of dead dust to which nothing can ever give life.

[1] Pringle-Pattison, *The Idea of God.* [2] Bradley.

INDEX

Absolute experience, 18, 22, 27
Abstractionist view of Universals, 190 *sq.*
Acquaintance, 174
  knowledge by, 118, Chap. VII. § 6
Act, cognitive, 49, 62, 67 *sqq.*, 81, 164 *sq.*, Chap. VIII. § 2, 203
Aesthetic experience, 21 *sq.*, 222, Chap. IX. § 3
  joy, 229
  repose, 228
Agnosticism, 136
Alexander, S., 2, 7, 43, 49, Chap. IV.
American New Realism, Chap. III.
Anti-intellectualism, 3
Appearance, 141 *sq.*, 145, 163
Artist and aesthete, 222
Artistic, religious, and metaphorical truth, *see* Truth, metaphorical, religious, and artistic
Atomism, sensory, 172

Baillie, J. B., 220 *sqq.*
Behaviourism, 4
Belief, 84 *sqq.*, 95
Beliefs, truth and error, 57 *sqq.*
Bergson, H., 3, 174
Berkeley, 192, 196 *sq.*
Bifurcation of nature, 143 *n.*
Bradley, F. H., 1, 17, 20, 22 *sqq.*, 209
Broad, C. D., 145, 150 *sqq.*, 165 *sqq.*, 186 *sqq.*
Browning, Robert, 22

Carr, H. W., 106, 209
Chain, image of, 17, 21, 218
Coherence, 10, Chap. II.
  of reality, 28 *sq.*, 74 *sq.*
  test, 10, 29, 74, 93
  true significance of, 28 *sqq.*
Compresence, 63, 68 *sq.*
Conception, representative, *see* "Representative conception"
Contemplation, *see* Enjoyment
Content, Hicks' view of, 164 *sq.*
Contents, 52 *sqq.*, 88 *sqq.*, 95, 102 *sqq.*, 109, 139 *sqq.*, 150 *sqq.*, 163
Continuum, sense, 172 *sqq.*
Contradiction, 45 *sqq.*, 56 *sq.*, 59 *sqq.*
Correspondence, 10, 27, Chap. V. *passim*, 181, 202
  real meaning of, 119
  tests of truth, 10, 94, 119 *sq.*, 203 *sq.*, 232
Creative theory, 171 *sq.*
Criterion of artistic truth, Chap. IX. § 4
Critical Realism, 5, 7, Chap. VI.

Data, sense, and physical objects, 170 *sqq.*
Datum, content and existence, 137
  sense, 6, 8, 123 *sqq.*, 130 *sq.*, Chap. VI. § 4, Chap. VII.
  sense, and size, Chap. VII. § 3
Degrees of truth and reality, 18, 39
Description, knowledge by, 177
Distributive unity of Universals, 195 *sqq.*
Drake, D., 126, 136 *sq.*, 163
Dualism, epistemological, 99 *sq.*, 126

Eckhart, 229
Enjoyment and contemplation, 63
Entities, data or contents as, 150 *sq.*, 171 *sq.*, 176
Epistemological Spiritualism, 5
Error, 25, 46, 57 *sqq.*, 64 *sqq.*
  and truth, Chap. VIII. § 6.
  causes of, 212 *sq.*
Essence, Chap. VI. *passim*
Existence, and Thought, *see* Thought and existence
  reality, unreality, *see* Reality, unreality, existence
Experience and truth, 21 *sq.*, 28
Expression, 223 *sqq.*
External relations, *see* Relations

Fact and objective, 107 *sq.*
Facts, 2
Falsity in art, 233

Feeling and truth, 236 *sq.*
Felt whole, 218
Fictitious imagination, 116

"Gap" between truth and Reality, 17, 26
Goodness, 223
Gregory, J. C., 7, 72

Hicks, G. D., 93, 137, 163 *sqq.*, 177, 186
Hocking, W. E., 49
Hoernlé, R. F. A., 1, 92, 184
Holt, E. B., Chap. III. *passim*, 70
Hume, 192, 196

Idea, nature of, 26. *See also* Transcension of knowledge
Idealism, Chap. II., 181
Illusion, 64, 213
Image propositions, *see* Propositions
Images and Imaging, 96 *sqq.*, 110 *sqq.*, Chap. V. § 6, 146, 169
  and words, 96 *sq.*
  physiological and psychological, 115
  retinal, *see* Retinal images
Imagination, fictitious, *see* Fictitious imagination
Intellectualism, 3
Internal relations, *see* Relations
Interpretation, 156 *sq.*
Introspection and extrospection, 64
Intuition, and knowledge, 126, 132 *sqq.*
  ecstasy, rapture, 235

James, W., 3, 13, 173, 184
Joachim, H. H., 15, 17 *sqq.*, 27, 85
Johnson, W. E., 23, 132
Judgment, idealistic view of, 16 *sq.*, 22; criticism of, 23 *sqq.*
  nature of, 22 *sqq.*, 85.
Judgments and propositions, 202 *sq.*

Keats, 230
Knowledge, and character, 206
  and truth, *see* Truth and knowledge
  as relation, 86 *sqq.*, 188 *sq.*
  by acquaintance, *see* Acquaintance
  by description, *see* Description
  kinds of, 200
  nature of, Chap. VIII. §§ 1, 2

Laird, J., 114 *sqq.*, 172, 186, 190 *sqq.*
Laird-Alexander view, 165
Locke, 118
Logic, 45 *sqq.*, 53 *sqq.*
Lovejoy, A. O., 125

Man and Universe, 221
Many and One, *see* One and Many
Materialism, 4 *sq.*
Meaning, 19, 35 *sqq.*, 137
  and truth, 19, 35 *sqq.*
Meinong, 82, 89
"Mental" and "real," 5 *sq.*, 80 *n.*, 91 *sqq.*
  knowledge as, 182. *See also* Act, cognitive
  sensa as, 165 *sqq.*
Metaphor, 234 *sqq.*
Metaphorical and artistic truth, *see* Truth, metaphorical and artistic
Monism, epistemological, 5, 39 *sq.*, 181
  metaphysical, 39
Montague, W. P., Chap. III. *passim*
Moore, G. E., 2, 42, 153 *sqq.*, 173, 186, 188 *sq.*
Morgan, Lloyd, 203
Mysticism, 229 *sqq.*

Negative facts, 96, 98, 109 *sq.*
New Realism, 4, 7 *sq.*, 42 *sq.*, 181, Chap. III.
Nominalism, 192 *sqq.*
Nunn, T. P., 151

Object, physical, *see* Physical object
Objective, and content, 102
  and fact, 106 *sqq.*
Objectives, 82 *sqq.*, 88 *sqq.*, 95 *sq.*, 101 *sqq.*
Objectivism, error of, 57, 181
One and Many, 32 *sqq.*, 197 *sq.*
Organism, the, and knowledge, 51, 69

Parts and whole, 34 *sq.*
Perception, judgments of, 154 *sqq.*
  representative, *see* Representative perception
Personal truth, *see* Truth, personal
Perspectives, 64 *sqq.*, 69 *sqq.*
Physical object, 123
Plato, 209, 234
Pratt, J. B., 125, 137
Prehension, 200 *sq.*
Prichard, H. A., 92, 172
Private, sensa as, 165
Progression of truth, 67, 75 *sqq.*
Propositional truth, 208 *sqq.*, 216 *sqq.*
  inadequacy of, 216 *sqq.*
Propositions, and judgments, *see* Judgments and propositions
  and mind, 203, 208
  word and image, 96 *sqq.*
Psychical, knowledge as, 182. *See also* Act, cognitive
Psychical state or idea, 123 *sqq.*

"Real" and "mental," *see* "Mental" and "real"
Realism, Critical, *see* Critical Realism
New, *see* New Realism
Reality, unreality, existence, 44, 47, 53, 55
Relations, 30 *sqq.*
Relativity, 34, 67, 75 *sqq.*
"Representative conception," 8 *sq.*
fallacy, 232
perception, 6, 136
Reproduction, 52
Retinal images, 162
Rogers, A. K., 122, 127 *sqq.*
Russell, B., 4, 7 *sq.*, 31, 42, 69, Chap. V., 151, 176 *sq.*, 211

Santayana, G., 124
Schiller, F. C. S., 38
Searchlight metaphor, 44, 64
Selective theory, 170
Sellars, R. W., 125 *sq.*, 129, 135 *sq.*, 139
Sense datum, *see* Datum, sense
Sensory atomism, *see* Atomism
Sensum, 152, *see also* Datum, sense
Shelley, 230
"Shipwreck" of coherence, 27
Significant whole, 18
Size, visual, 160 *sqq.*
Size and sense data, Chap. VII. § 3
Smith-Jones case, 107 *sqq.*, 209 *sqq.*
Social criterion, 66 *sq.*, 73 *sqq.*
Spiritualism, epistemological, 5
Squinting, 64 *sq.*, 72
Stace, W. T., 235
Stebbing, L. S., 34
Stout, G. F., 29, 33, 92, 144, 152 *sq.*, 185, 195 *sqq.*
Strange, E. H., 24
Strong, C. A., 9
Subjective facts, 44 *sqq.*, 48 *sqq.*, 52 *sqq.*, 78
Subjectivism, 44 *sqq.*, 48 *sqq.*, 181
"Suicide" of thought, 17, 26
Syllogisms, 219
Symbolism of art, 222, 225 *sq.*

Tagore, R., 229
Thought and existence or reality, 25 *sqq.*, 56 *sqq.*, 71 *sq.*, 81 *sqq.*, 86 *sqq.*, 129
Thoughts and thinking, 113
Transcension of knowledge, 144, 183 *sqq.*, 188, 204
Truth, Absolute Idealist view of, 14, Chap. II.
and beauty, 239
and error, 65 *sqq.*, 73 *sq.*, 81, 109, 127 *sqq.*, 209
and error, nature of, Chap. VIII. § 6
and experience, *see* Experience and truth
and feeling, 236 *sq.*
and knowledge, 10, 181, 199 *sqq.*
and meaning, *see* Meaning and truth
as property of mental act, 29, 185
kinds of, 200
metaphorical, religious, and artistic, 11, 205 *sqq.*, Chap. IX.
personal, 207 *sq.*
tests of, 10, 29, 74, 117, 185, 203 *sq.*, 212

Universals, 131 *sq.*, Chap. VIII. § 3
and characters, 131 *sq.*
genesis of, 191 *sqq.*
Universe, Man and, *see* Man and Universe
Unreality, *see* Reality, unreality, existence

Vision, pure, 161
unsophisticated, 161
Visual size, *see* Size, visual

Ward, J., 143, 185
Whitehead, A. N., 143 *n.*
Whole, aesthetic, 227
and parts, *see* Parts and whole
Wholes, finite and universal, 227
Word and image propositions, *see* Propositions
Words, function of, 105
Wordsworth, 229

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